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**SELECT
WORKS
OF THE
BRITISH POETS.**

**WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL and CRITICAL PREFACES.**

**BY
D^R. AIKIN.**

in Ten Volumes. VOL. X.



L O N D O N .

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Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
Printers Street, London.

WILLIAM COWPER.

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THE TASK.

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THE GARDEN.

Argument.

Self-recollection and reproof. Address to domestic happiness. Some account of myself. The vanity of many of their pursuits, who are reputed wise. Justification of my censures. Divine illumination necessary to the most expert philosopher. The question, What is truth? answered by other questions. Domestic happiness addressed again. Few lovers of the country. My tame hare. Occupations of a retired gentleman in his garden. Pruning. Framing. Green-house. Sowing of flower-seeds. The country preferable to the town even in the winter. Reasons why it is deserted at that season. Ruinous effects of gaming, and of expensive improvement. Book concludes with an apostrophe to the metropolis.

As one, who long in thickets and in brakes
Entangled winds now this way and now that

VOL. I.

B

His devious course uncertain, seeking home ;
Or, having long in miry ways been foil'd
And sore discomfited, from slough to slough
Plunging and half-despairing of escape ;
If chance at length he find a green sward smooth
And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise,
He cherups brisk his ear-erecting steed,
And winds his way with pleasure and with ease ;
So I, designing other themes, and call'd
T' adorn the Sofa with eulogium due,
To tell it's slumbers, and to paint it's dreams,
Have rambl'd wide. In country, city, seat
Of academic fame (howe'er deserv'd),
Long held, and scarcely disengag'd at last.
But now with pleasant pace a cleaner road
I mean to tread. I feel myself at large,
Courageous, and refresh'd for future toil,
If toil await me, or if dangers new.

Since pulpits fail, and sounding boards reflect
Most part an empty ineffectual sound,
What chance that I, to fame so little known,
Nor conversant with men or manners much,
Should speak to purpose, or with better hope
Crack the satiric thong ? 'T were wiser far
For me, enamour'd of sequester'd scenes,
And charm'd with rural beauty, to repose,
Where chance may throw me, beneath elm or vine,
My languid limbs, when summer sears the plains ;
Or, when rough winter rages, on the soft
And shelter'd Sofa, while the nitrous air
Feeds a blue flame, and makes a cheerful hearth ;
There, undisturb'd by folly, and appris'd

How great the danger of disturbing her,
To muse in silence, or at least confine
Remarks, that gall so many, to the few
My partners in retreat. Disgust conceal'd
Is oft-times proof of wisdom, when the fault
Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach.

Domestic Happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise, that hast surviv'd the fall !
Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure,
Or tasting long enjoy thee ! too infirm,
Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
Unmix'd with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup ;
Thou art the nurse of Virtue, in thine arms
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
Heav'n-born, and destin'd to the skies again.
Thou art not known where Pleasure is ador'd,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist
And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of Novelty, her fickle, frail support ;
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding in the calm of truth-tried love
Joys, that her stormy raptures never yield.
Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown !
Till prostitution elbows us aside
In all our crowded streets ; and senates seem
Conven'd for purposes of empire less,
Than to release th' adul'tress from her bond.
Th' adul'tress ! what a theme for angry verse !
What provocation to th' indignant heart,
That feels for injur'd love ! but I disdain

The nauseous task, to paint her as she is,
Cruel, abandon'd, glorying in her shame !
No : — let her pass, and, chariotted along
In guilty splendour, shake the public ways ;
The frequency of crimes has wash'd them white,
And verse of mine shall never brand the wretch,
Whom matrons now of character unsmirch'd,
And chaste themselves, are not ashamed to own.
Virtue and vice had bound'ries in old time,
Not to be pass'd : and she, that had renounc'd
Her sex's honour, was renounc'd herself
By all that priz'd it ; not for prud'ry's sake,
But dignity's, resentful of the wrong.
'T was hard perhaps on here and there a wail,
Desirous to return, and not receiv'd :
But was a wholesome rigour in the main,
And taught th' unblemish'd to preserve with care
That purity, whose loss was loss of all.
Men too were nice in honour in those days,
And judg'd offenders well. Then he that sharp'd,
And pocketted a prize by fraud obtain'd,
Was mark'd and shunn'd as odious. He that sold
His country, or was slack when she requir'd
His ev'ry nerve in action and at stretch,
Paid with the blood, that he had basely spar'd,
The price of his default. But now — yes, now
We are become so candid and so fair,
So lib'ral in construction, and so rich
In Christian charity, (good-natur'd age !)
That they are safe, sinners of either sex,
Transgress what laws they may. Well-dress'd, well-
bred,

Well-equipag'd, is ticket good enough,
To pass us readily through ev'ry door.
Hypocrisy, detest her as we may,
(And no man's hatred ever wrong'd her yet,)
May claim this merit still — that she admits
The worth of what she mimics with such care,
And thus gives virtue indirect applause ;
But she has burnt her mask not needed here,
Where vice has such allowance, that her shifts
And specious semblances have lost their use.

I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
Long since. With many an arrow deep infix'd
My panting side was charg'd, when I withdrew,
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There was I found by one, who had himself
Been hurt by th' archers. In his side he bore,
And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and heal'd, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene ;
With few associates, and not wishing more.
Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.
I see that all are wand'ers, gone astray
Each in his own delusions ; they are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
And never won. Dream after dream ensues ;
And still they dream, that they shall still succeed,
And still are disappointed. Rings the world

With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind,
And add two-thirds of the remaining half,
And find the total of their hopes and fears
Dreams, empty dreams. The million flit as gay,
As if created only like the fly,
That spreads his motley wings in th' eye of noon,
To sport their season, and be seen no more.
The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise,
And pregnant with discov'ries new and rare.
Some write a narrative of wars, and feats
Of heroes little known ; and call the rant
A history : describe the man, of whom
His own coëvals took but little note,
And paint his person, character, and views,
As they had known him from his mother's womb.
They disentangle from the puzzled skein,
In which obscurity has wrapp'd them up,
The threads of politic and shrewd design,
That ran through all his purposes, and charge
His mind with meanings that he never had,
Or, having, kept conceal'd. Some drill and bore
The solid earth, and from the strata there
Extract a register, by which we learn,
That he who made it, and reveal'd it's date
To Moses, was mistaken in it's age.
Some, more acute, and more industrious still,
Contrive creation ; travel nature up
To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
And tell us whence the stars ; why some are fix'd,
And planetary some ; what gave them first
Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light.
Great contest follows, and much learned dust

Involves the combatants ; each claiming truth,
And truth disclaiming both. And thus they spend
The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp
In playing tricks with nature, giving laws
To distant worlds, and trifling in their own.
Is 't not a pity now, that tickling rheums
Should ever tease the lungs, and blear the sight
Of oracles like these? Great pity too,
That having wielded th' elements, and built
A thousand systems, each in his own way,
They should go out in fume, and be forgot!
Ah! what is life thus spent? and what are they
But frantic, who thus spend it? all for smoke—
Eternity for bubbles proves at last
A senseless bargain. When I see such games
Play'd by the creatures of a pow'r, who swears
That he will judge the Earth, and call the fool
To a sharp reck'ning, that has liv'd in vain ;
And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,
And prove it in the infallible result
So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
If this be learning, most of all deceiv'd.
Great crimes alarm the conscience, but it sleeps,
While thoughtful man is plausibly amus'd.
Defend me therefore, common sense, say I,
From reveries so airy, from the toil
Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up!
“ 'T were well,” says one sage erudite, profound,
Terribly arch'd, and aquiline his nose,
And overbuilt with most impending brows,

“ ’T were well, could you permit the World to live
As the World pleases : what’s the World to you !”

Much. I was born of woman, and drew milk
As sweet as charity from human breasts.

I think, articulate, I laugh and weep,
And exercise all functions of a man.

How then should I and any man that live
Be strangers to each other ? Pierce my vein,
Take of the crimson stream meand’ring there,
And catechise it well : apply thy glass,
Search it, and prove now if it be not blood
Congenial with thine own ; and, if it be,
What edge of subtlety canst thou suppose
Keen enough, wise and skilful as thou art,
To cut the link of brotherhood, by which
One common Maker bound me to the kind ?

True, I am no proficient, I confess,
In arts like yours. I cannot call the swift
And perilous lightnings from the angry clouds,
And bid them hide themselves in earth beneath ;
I cannot analyse the air, nor catch
The parallax of yonder lum’nous point,
That seems half quench’d in the immense abyss :
Such pow’rs I boast not — neither can I rest
A silent witness of the headlong rage,
Or heedless folly, by which thousands die,
Bone of my bone, and kindred souls to mine.

God never meant, that man should scale the
Heav’ns

By strides of human wisdom, in his works,
Though wondrous : he commands us in his word
To seek him rather, where his mercy shines.

The mind, indeed, enlighten'd from above,
Views him in all; ascribes to the grand cause
The grand effect; acknowledges with joy
His manner, and with rapture tastes his style.
But never yet did philosophic tube,
That brings the planets home into the eye
Of Observation, and discovers, else
Not visible, his family of worlds,
Discover him, that rules them; such a veil
Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
And dark in things divine. Full often too
Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
Of nature, overlooks her author more;
From instrumental causes proud to draw
Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.
But if his word once teach us, shoot a ray
Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,
Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptiz'd
In the pure fountain of eternal love,
Has eyes indeed; and viewing all she sees
As meant to indicate a God to man,
Gives *him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.
Learning has borne such fruit in other days
On all her branches: piety has found
Friends in the friends of science, and true pray'r
Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.
Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!
Sagacious reader of the works of God,
And in his word sagacious. Such too thine,
Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
And fed on manna! And such thine, in whom

Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
Immortal Hale ! for deep discernment prais'd,
And sound integrity, not more than fam'd
For sanctity of manners undefil'd.

All flesh is grass, and all it's glory fades
Like the fair flow'r dishevell'd in the wind ;
Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream.
The man we celebrate must find a tomb,
And we that worship him ignoble graves.
Nothing is proof against the gen'ral curse
Of vanity, that seizes all below.
The only amaranthine flow'r on Earth
Is virtue ; th' only lasting treasure, truth.
But what is truth ? 'T was Pilate's question put
To Truth itself, that deign'd him no reply.
And wherefore ? will not God impart his light
To them that ask it ? — Freely — 't is his joy,
His glory, and his nature to impart.
But to the proud, uncandid, insincere,
Or negligent inquirer, not a spark.
What 's that, which brings contempt upon a book,
And him who writes it, though the style be neat,
The method clear, and argument exact ?
That makes a minister in holy things
The joy of many, and the dread of more ;
His name a theme for praise and for reproach ?—
That, while it gives us worth in God's account,
Depreciates and undoes us in our own ?
What pearl is it, that rich men cannot buy,
That learning is too proud to gather up ;
But which the poor, and the despis'd of all,
Seek and obtain, and often find unsought ?
Tell me — and I will tell thee what is truth.

O friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life in rural pleasure past !
Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweets ;
Though many boast thy favours, and affect
To understand and choose thee for their own.
But foolish man foregoes his proper bliss,
Ev'n as his first progenitor, and quits,
Though plac'd in Paradise, (for Earth has still
Some traces of her youthful beauty left,)
Substantial happiness for transient joy.
Scenes form'd for contemplation, and to nurse
The growing seeds of wisdom ; that suggest,
By ev'ry pleasing image they present,
Reflections such as meliorate the heart,
Compose the passions, and exalt the mind ;
Scenes such as these, 't is his supreme delight
To fill with riot, and defile with blood.
Should some contagion, kind to the poor brutes
We persecute, annihilate the tribes,
That draw the sportsman over hill and dale
Fearless and rapt away from all his cares ;
Should never game-fowl hatch her eggs again,
Nor baited hook deceive the fish's eye ;
Could pageantry and dance, and feast and song,
Be quell'd in all our summer-months' retreats ;
How many self-deluded nymphs and swains,
Who dream they have a taste for fields and groves,
Would find them hideous nurs'ries of the spleen,
And crowd the roads, impatient for the town !
They love the country, and none else, who seek
For their own sake it's silence, and it's shade,

Delights which who would leave, that has a heart
Susceptible of pity, or a mind
Cultur'd and capable of sober thought,
For all the savage din of the swift pack,
And clamours of the field? — Detested sport,
That owes it's pleasures to another's pain ;
That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
Of harmless nature, dumb but yet endued
With eloquence, that agonies inspire,
Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs ?
Vain tears, alas ! and sighs that never find
A corresponding tone in jovial souls !
Well — one at least is safe. One shelter'd hare
Has never heard the sanguinary yell
Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.
Innocent partner of my peaceful home,
Whom ten long years' experience of my care
Has made at last familiar ; she has lost
Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,
Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine. .
Yes — thou may'st eat thy bread, and lick the hand
That feeds thee ; thou may'st frolic on the floor
At ev'ning, and at night retire secure
To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd ;
For I have gain'd thy confidence, have pledg'd
All that is human in me, to protect
Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.
If I survive thee, I will dig thy grave ;
And, when I place thee in it, sighing say,
I knew at least one hare that had a friend.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle ; and who justly in return

Esteems that busy world an idler too !
Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen,
Delightful industry enjoy'd at home,
And Nature in her cultivated trim
Dress'd to his taste, inviting him abroad —
Can he want occupation, who has these ?
Will he be idle, who has much t' enjoy ?
Me therefore studious of laborious ease,
Not slothful, happy to deceive the time,
Not waste it, and aware that human life
Is but a loan to be repaid with use,
When He shall call his debtors to account,
From whom are all our blessings, business finds
Ev'n here ! while sedulous I seek t' improve,
At least neglect not, or leave unemploy'd,
The mind he gave me ; driving it, though slack
Too oft, and much impeded in its work
By causes not to be divulg'd in vain,
To it's just point — the service of mankind.
He, that attends to his interior self,
That has a heart, and keeps it ; has a mind
That hungers, and supplies it ; and who seeks
A social, not a dissipated life,
Has business ; feels himself engag'd t' achieve
No unimportant, though a silent, task.
A life all turbulence and noise may seem,
To him that leads it, wise, and to be prais'd ;
But wisdom is a pearl with most success
Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies.
He that is ever occupied in storms,
Or dives not for it, or brings up instead,
Vainly industrious, a disgraceful prize.

The morning finds the self-sequester'd man
Fresh for his task, intend what task he may.
Whether inclement seasons recommend
His warm but simple home, where he enjoys
With her, who shares his pleasures and his heart,
Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph,
Which neatly she prepares ; then to his book
Well chosen, and not sullenly perus'd
In selfish silence, but imparted oft,
As aught occurs, that she may smile to hear,
Or turn to nourishment, digested well.
Or if the garden with it's many cares,
All well repaid, demand him, he attends
The welcome call, conscious how much the hand
Of lubbard Labour needs his watchful eye,
Oft loit'ring lazily, if not o'erseen,
Or misapplying his unskilful strength.
Nor does he govern only or direct,
But much performs himself. No works, indeed,
That ask robust, tough sinews, bred to toil,
Servile employ ; but such as may amuse,
Not tire, demanding rather skill than force.
Proud of his well-spread walls, he views his trees,
That meet, no barren interval between,
With pleasure more than ev'n their fruits afford ;
Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel.
These therefore are his own peculiar charge ;
No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,
None but his steel approach them. What is weak,
Distemper'd, or has lost prolific pow'rs,
Impair'd by age, his unrelenting hand
Dooms to the knife : nor does he spare the soft

And succulent, that feeds it's giant growth,
But barren, at th' expense of neighb'ring twigs
Less ostentatious, and yet studded thick
With hopeful gems. The rest, no portion left
That may disgrace his art, or disappoint
Large expectation, he disposes neat
At measur'd distances, that air and sun,
Admitted freely, may afford their aid,
And ventilate and warm the swelling buds.
Hence Summer has her riches, Autumn hence,
And hence ev'n Winter fills his wither'd hand
With blushing fruits, and plenty not his own.
Fair recompense of labour well bestow'd,
And wise precaution; which a clime so rude
Makes needful still, whose Spring is but the child
Of churlish Winter, in her froward moods
Discov'ring much the temper of her sire.
For oft, as if in her the stream of mild
Maternal nature had revers'd it's course,
She brings her infants forth with many smiles;
But once deliver'd kills them with a frown.
He therefore, timely warn'd himself, supplies
Her want of care, screening and keeping warm
The plenteous bloom, that no rough blast may sweep
His garlands from the boughs. Again, as oft
As the Sun peeps and vernal airs breathe mild,
The fence withdrawn, he gives them ev'ry beam,
And spreads his hopes before the blaze of day.

To raise the prickly and green-coated gourd,
So grateful to the palate, and when rare
So coveted, else base and disesteem'd —
Food for the vulgar merely — is an art

That toiling ages have but just matur'd,
And at this moment unassay'd in song.
Yet gnats have had, and frogs and mice, long since,
Their eulogy; those sang the Mantuan bard,
And these the Grecian, in ennobling strains;
And in thy numbers, Phillips, shines for aye
The solitary shilling. Pardon then,
Ye sage dispensers of poetic fame,
Th' ambition of one meaner far, whose pow'rs
Presuming an attempt not less sublime,
Pant for the praise of dressing to the taste
Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,
A cucumber, while costly yet and scarce.

The stable yields a stercoraceous heap;
Impregnated with quick fermenting salts,
And potent to resist the freezing blast;
For, ere the beech and elm have cast their leaf
Deciduous, when now November dark
Checks vegetation in the torpid plant
Expos'd to his cold breath, the task begins.
Warily therefore, and with prudent heed,
He seeks a favour'd spot; that where he builds
Th' agglomerated pile his frame may front
The Sun's meridian disk, and at the back
Enjoy close shelter, wall, or reeds, or hedge
Impervious to the wind. First he bids spread
Dry fern or litter'd hay, that may imbibe
Th' ascending damps; then leisurely impose,
And lightly, shaking it with agile hand
From the full fork, the saturated straw.
What longest binds the closest forms secure
The shapely side, that as it rises takes,

By just degrees, an overhanging breadth,
Shelt'ring the base with its projected eaves ;
Th' uplifted frame compact at ev'ry joint,
And overlaid with clear translucent glass,
He settles next upon the sloping mount,
Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure
From the dash'd pane the deluge as it falls.
He shuts it close, and the first labour ends.
Thrice must the voluble and restless Earth
Spin round upon her axle, ere the warmth,
Slow gath'ring in the midst, through the square mass
Diffus'd, attain the surface : when, behold !
A pestilent and most corrosive steam,
Like a gross fog Boeotian, rising fast,
And fast condens'd upon the dewy sash,
Asks egress ; which obtain'd, the overcharg'd
And drench'd conservatory breathes abroad,
In volumes wheeling slow, the vapour dank ;
And, purified, rejoices to have lost
Its foul inhabitant. But to assuage
Th' impatient fervour, which it first conceives
Within its reeking bosom, threat'ning death
To his young hopes, requires discreet delay.
Experience, slow preceptress, teaching oft
The way to glory by miscarriage foul,
Must prompt him, and admonish how to catch
Th' auspicious moment, when the temper'd heat,
Friendly to vital motion, may afford
Soft fomentation, and invite the seed.
The seed, selected wisely, plump, and smooth,
And glossy, he commits to pots of size
Diminutive, well fill'd with well prepar'd

And fruitful soil, that has been treasur'd long,
And drank no moisture from the dripping clouds.
These on the warm and genial earth, that hides
The smoking manure, and o'erspreads it all,
He places lightly, and, as time subdues
The rage of fermentation, plunges deep
In the soft medium, till they stand immers'd.
Then rise the tender germs, upstarting quick,
And spreading wide their spongy lobes ; at first
Pale, wan, and livid ; but assuming soon,
If fann'd by balmy and nutritious air,
Strain'd through the friendly mats, a vivid green.
Two leaves produc'd, two rough indented leaves,
Cautious he pinches from the second stalk
A pimple, that portends a future sprout,
And interdicts it's growth. Thence straight succeed
The branches, sturdy to his utmost wish ;
Prolific all, and harbingers of more.
The crowded roots demand enlargement now,
And transplantation in an ampler space.
Indulg'd in what they wish, they soon supply
Large foliage, overshadow'ing golden flow'rs,
Blown on the summit of th' apparent fruit.
These have their sexes ! and, when Summer shines,
The bee transports the fertilizing meal
From flow'r to flow'r, and ev'n the breathing air
Wafts the rich prize to it's appointed use.
Not so when Winter scowls. Assistant Art
Then acts in Nature's office, brings to pass
The glad espousals, and ensures the crop.
Grudge not, ye rich, (since Luxury must have
His dainties, and the world's more num'rous half

Lives by contriving delicates for you,)
Grudge not the cost. Ye little know the cares,
The vigilance, the labour, and the skill
That day and night are exercis'd, and hang
Upon the ticklish balance of suspense,
That ye may garnish your profuse regales
With summer fruits brought forth by wint'ry suns.
Ten thousand dangers lie in wait to thwart
The process. Heat and cold, and wind, and steam,
Moisture and drought, mice, worms, and swarming
flies,

Minute as dust, and numberless, oft work
Dire disappointment, that admits no cure,
And which no care can obviate. It were long,
Too long, to tell th' expedients and the shifts,
Which he that fights a season so severe
Devises, while he guards his tender trust ;
And oft at last in vain. The learn'd and wise
Sarcastic would exclaim, and judge the song
Cold as it's theme, and like it's theme the fruit
Of too much labour, worthless when produc'd.

Who loves a garden, loves a greenhouse too.
Unconscious of a less propitious clime,
There blooms exotic beauty, warm and snug,
While the winds whistle, and the snows descend.
The spiry myrtle with unwith'ring leaf
Shines there, and flourishes. The golden boast
Of Portugal and western India there,
The ruddier orange, and the paler lime,
Peep through their polish'd foliage at the storm,
And seem to smile at what they need not fear.
Th' amomum there with intermingling flow'rs

And cherries hangs her twigs. Geranium boasts
Her crimson honours ; and the spangled beau,
Ficoides, glitters bright the winter long.
All plants, of ev'ry leaf, that can endure
The winter's frown, if screen'd from his shrewd bite,
Live there, and prosper. Those Ausonia claims,
Levantine regions these ; th' Azores send
Their jessamine : her jessamine remote
Caffraia : foreigners from many lands,
They form one social shade, as if conven'd
By magic summons of th' Orphean lyre.
Yet just arrangement, rarely brought to pass
But by a master's hand disposing well
The gay diversities of leaf and flow'r,
Must lend it's aid t' illustrate all their charms,
And dress the regular yet various scene.
Plant behind plant aspiring, in the van
The dwarfish, in the rear retir'd, but still
Sublime above the rest, the statelier stand.
So once were rang'd the sons of ancient Rome,
A noble show ! while Roscius trod the stage ;
And so, while Garrick, as renown'd as he,
The sons of Albion ; fearing each to lose
Some note of Nature's music from his lips,
And covetous of Shakspeare's beauty, seen
In ev'ry flash of his far-beaming eye.
Nor taste alone and well-contriv'd display
Suffice to give the marshall'd ranks the grace
Of their complete effect. Much yet remains
Unsung, and many cares are yet behind,
And more laborious ; cares on which depends
Their vigour, injur'd soon, not soon restor'd.

The soil must be renew'd, which often wash'd
Loses its treasure of salubrious salts,
And disappoints the roots ; the slender roots
Close interwoven, where they meet the vase
Must smooth be shorn away ; the sapless branch
Must fly before the knife ; the wither'd leaf
Must be detach'd, and where it strews the floor
Swept with a woman's neatness, breeding else
Contagion, and disseminating death.
Discharge but these kind offices, (and who
Would spare, that loves them, offices like these ?)
Well they reward the toil. The sight is pleas'd,
The scent regal'd, each odorif'rous leaf,
Each op'ning blossom, freely breathes abroad
It's gratitude, and thanks him with it's sweets.

So manifold, all pleasing in their kind,
All healthful, are th' employs of rural life,
Reiterated as the wheel of time
Runs round ; still ending, and beginning still.
Nor are these all. To deck the shapely knoll,
That softly swell'd and gaily dress'd appears
A flow'ry island, from the dark green lawn
Emerging, must be deem'd a labour due
To no mean hand, and asks the touch of taste.
Here also grateful mixture of well-match'd
And sorted hues (each giving each relief,
And by contrasted beauty shining more)
Is needful. Strength may wield the pond'rous
spade,
May turn the clod, and wheel the compost home ;
But elegance, chief grace the garden shows
And most attractive, is the fair result

Of thought, the creature of a polish'd mind.
Without it, all is Gothic as the scene
To which th' insipid citizen resorts
Near yonder heath ; where Industry mis-spent,
But proud of his uncouth ill-chosen task,
Has made a Heav'n on Earth ; with suns and moons
Of close-ramm'd stones has charged th' encumber'd
soil,

And fairly laid the zodiac in the dust.
He, therefore, who would see his flow'rs dispos'd
Sightly and in just order, ere he gives
The beds the trusted treasure of their seeds,
Forecasts the future whole ; that when the scene
Shall break into it's preconceiv'd display,
Each for itself, and all as with one voice
Conspiring, may attest his bright design.
Nor even then, dismissing as perform'd
His pleasant work, may he suppose it done.
Few self-supported flow'rs endure the wind
Uninjur'd, but expect th' upholding aid
Of the smooth-shaven prop, and, neatly tied,
Are wedded thus, like beauty to old age,
For int'rest sake, the living to the dead.
Some clothe the soil that feeds them, far diffus'd
And lowly creeping, modest and yet fair,
Like Virtue, thriving most where little seen :
Some more aspiring catch the neighbour shrub
With clasping tendrils, and invest his branch,
Else unadorn'd, with many a gay festoon
And fragrant chaplet, recompensing well
The strength they borrow with the grace they lend.
All hate the rank society of weeds,

Noisome, and ever greedy to exhaust
Th' impov'rish'd earth ; an overbearing race,
That, like the multitude made faction-mad,
Disturb good order, and degrade true worth.

O blest seclusion from a jarring world,
Which he, thus occupied, enjoys ! Retreat
Cannot indeed to guilty man restore
Lost innocence, or cancel follies past ;
But it has peace, and much secures the mind
From all assaults of evil ; proving still
A faithful barrier, not o'erleap'd with ease
By vicious Custom, raging uncontroll'd
Abroad, and desolating public life.
When fierce Temptation, seconded within
By traitor Appetite, and arm'd with darts
Temper'd in Hell, invades the throbbing breast,
To combat may be glorious, and success
Perhaps may crown us ; but to fly is safe.
Had I the choice of sublunary good,
What could I wish, that I possess not here ? [peace,
Health, leisure, means t' improve it, friendship,
No loose or wanton, though a wand'ring, Muse,
And constant occupation without care.
Thus blest, I draw a picture of that bliss ;
Hopeless indeed, that dissipated minds,
And profligate abusers of a world
Created fair so much in vain for them,
Should seek the guiltless joys, that I describe,
Allur'd by my report : but sure no less,
That self-condemn'd they must neglect the prize,
And what they will not taste must yet approve.
What we admire, we praise ; and, when we praise,

Advance it into notice, that, it's worth
Acknowleg'd, others may admire it too.
I therefore recommend, though at the risk
Of popular disgust, yet boldly still,
The cause of piety, and sacred truth,
And virtue, and those scenes, which God ordain'd
Should best secure them, and promote them most ;
Scenes that I love, and with regret perceive
Forsaken, or through folly not enjoy'd.
Pure is the nymph, though lib'ral of her smiles,
And chaste, though unconfin'd, whom I extol.
Not as the prince in Shushan, when he call'd,
Vain-glorious of her charms, his Vashti forth,
To grace the full pavilion. His design
Was but to boast his own peculiar good,
Which all might view with envy, none partake.
My charmer is not mine alone ; my sweets,
And she, that sweetens all my bitters too,
Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form
And lineaments divine I trace a hand,
That errs not, and find raptures still renew'd,
Is free to all men — universal prize.
Strange that so fair a creature should yet want
Admirers, and be destin'd to divide
With meaner objects ev'n the few she finds !
Stripp'd of her ornaments, her leaves and flowers,
She loses all her influence. Cities then
Attract us, and neglected Nature pines
Abandon'd, as unworthy of our love.
But are not wholesome airs, though unperfum'd
By roses ; and clear suns, though scarcely felt ;
And groves, if unharmonious, yet secure

From clamour, and whose very silence charms ;
To be preferr'd to smoke, to the eclipse,
That metropolitan volcanoes make, [long ;
Whose Stygian throats breathe darkness all day
And to the stir of Commerce, driving slow,
And thund'ring loud, with his ten thousand wheels?
They would be, were not madness in the head,
And folly in the heart ; were England now,
What England was, plain, hospitable, kind,
And undebauch'd. But we have bid farewell
To all the virtues of those better days,
And all their honest pleasures. Mansions once
Knew their own masters ; and laborious hinds,
Who had surviv'd the father, serv'd the son.
Now the legitimate and rightful lord
Is but a transient guest, newly arriv'd,
As soon to be supplanted. He, that saw
His patrimonial timber cast it's leaf,
Sells the last scantling, and transfers the price
To some shrewd sharper, ere it buds again.
Estates are landscapes, gaz'd upon awhile,
Then advertis'd and auctioneer'd away. [charg'd
The country starves, and they, that feed th' o'er-
And surfeited lewd town with her fair dues,
By a just judgment strip and starve themselves.
The wings, that waft our riches out of sight,
Grow on the gamester's elbows, and th' alert
And nimble motion of those restless joints,
That never tire, soon fans them all away.
Improvement, too, the idol of the age,
Is fed with many a victim. Lo, he comes !
Th' omnipotent magician, Brown, appears !

Down falls the venerable pile, th' abode
Of our forefathers — a grave whisker'd race,
But tasteless. Springs a palace in it's stead,
But in a distant spot ; where more expos'd
It may enjoy th' advantage of the north,
And aguish east, till time shall have transform'd
Those naked acres to a shelt'ring grove.
He speaks. The lake in front becomes a lawn ;
Woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise ;
And streams, as if created for his use,
Pursue the track of his directing wand,
Sinuous or straight, now rapid and now slow,
Now murm'ring soft, now roaring in cascades —
Ev'n as he bids ! Th' enraptur'd owner smiles.
'T is finish'd, and yet, finish'd as it seems,
Still wants a grace, the loveliest it could show,
A mine to satisfy th' enormous cost.
Drain'd to the last poor item of his wealth,
He sighs, departs, and leaves th' accomplish'd plan,
That he has touch'd, retouch'd, many a long day
Labour'd, and many a night pursu'd in dreams,
Just when it meets his hopes, and proves the Heav'n
He wanted, for a wealthier to enjoy ;
And now perhaps the glorious hour is come,
When, having no stake left, no pledge t' endear
Her int'rests, or that gives her sacred cause
A moment's operation on his love,
He burns with most intense and flagrant zeal,
To serve his country. Ministerial grace
Deals him out money from the public chest ;
Or if that mine be shut, some private purse
Supplies his need with a usurious loan,

To be refunded duly, when his vote
Well manag'd shall have earn'd it's worthy price.
O innocent, compar'd with arts like these,
Crape, and cock'd pistol, and the whistling ball
Sent through the trav'ller's temples ! He that finds
One drop of Heav'n's sweet mercy in his cup,
Can dig, beg, rot, and perish, well content ;
So he may wrap himself in honest rags
At his last gasp ; but could not for a world
Fish up his dirty and dependent bread
From pools and ditches of the commonwealth,
Sordid and sick'ning at his own success.

Ambition, av'rice, penury incurr'd
By endless riot, vanity, the lust
Of pleasure and variety, dispatch,
As duly as the swallows disappear,
The world of wand'ring knights and squires to town.
London ingulfs them all ! The shark is there,
And the shark's prey ; the spendthrift, and the leech
That sucks him : there the sycophant, and he
Who, with bareheaded and obsequious bows,
Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold gaol
And groat per diem, if his patron frown.
The levee swarms as if in golden pomp
Were character'd on ev'ry statesman's door,
" BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDED
HERE."

These are the charms, that sully and eclipse
The charms of nature. 'T is the cruel gripe,
That lean, hard-handed Poverty inflicts,
The hope of better things, the chance to win,
The wish to shine, the thirst to be amus'd,

That at the sound of Winter's hoary wing
Unpeople all our counties of such herds
Of flutt'ring, loit'ring, cringing, begging, loose,
And wanton vagrants, as make London, vast
And boundless as it is, a crowded coop.

O thou, resort and mart of all the Earth,
Chequer'd with all complexions of mankind,
And spotted with all crimes ; in whom I see
Much that I love, and more that I admire,
And all that I abhor ; thou freckled fair,
That pleasest and yet shock'st me, I can laugh,
And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,
Feel wrath and pity, when I think on thee !
Ten righteous would have sav'd a city once,
And thou hast many righteous. — Well for thee —
That salt preserves thee ; more corrupted else,
And therefore more obnoxious, at this hour,
Than Sodom in her day had pow'r to be,
For whom God heard his Abr'ham plead in vain.

BOOK IV.

THE WINTER EVENING.

Argument.

The post comes in. The newspaper is read.
The World contemplated at a distance. Address
to Winter. The rural amusements of a winter
evening compared with the fashionable ones.
Address to evening. A brown study. Fall
of snow in the evening. The waggoner. A
poor family-piece. The rural thief. Public
houses. The multitude of them censured.

The farmer's daughter : what she was — what she is. The simplicity of country manners almost lost. Causes of the change. Desertion of the country by the rich. Neglect of magistrates. The militia principally in fault. The new recruit and his transformation. Reflection on bodies corporate. The love of rural objects natural to all, and never to be totally extinguished.

HARK ! 't is the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with it's wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the Moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright ; —
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks ;
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back.
'True to his charge, the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destin'd inn ;
And, having dropp'd th' expect'd bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful : messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some ;
To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy,
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears, that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charg'd with am'rous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But O th' important budget ! usher'd in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say

What are its tidings? have our troops awak'd?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of the Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plum'd
And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh — I long to know them all;
I burn to set th' imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance once again.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful ev'ning in.
Not such his ev'ning, who with shining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and, squeez'd
And bor'd with elbow-points through both his sides,
Outcolds the ranting actor on the stage:
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb,
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots, bursting with heroic rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not ev'n critics criticise; that holds
Inquisitive Attention, while I read,
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;
What is it, but a map of busy life,
It's fluctuations, and it's vast concerns?

Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge,
That tempts Ambition. On the summit see
The seals of office glitter in his eyes ;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them ! At his heels,
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
And with a dext'rous jerk soon twists him down,
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence in soft
Meanders lubricate the course they take ;
The modest speaker is asham'd and griev'd
T' engross a moment's notice ; and yet begs,
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
However trivial all that he conceives.
Sweet bashfulness ! it claims at least this praise ;
The dearth of information and good sense,
That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
Cat'racts of declamation thunder here :
There forests of no meaning spread the page,
In which all comprehension wanders lost ;
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
With merry descants on a nation's woes.
The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion ; roses for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth, and ocean, plunder'd of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feasts, and fav'rite airs,
Æthereal journies, submarine exploits,
And Katerfelto, with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread.
'T is pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat,

To peep at such a world ; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd ;
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjur'd ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease
The globe and it's concerns, I seem advanc'd
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That lib'rates and exempts me from them all.
It turns submitted to my view, turns round
With all it's generations ; I behold
The tumult, and am still. The sound of war
Has lost it's terrours ere it reaches me ;
Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
And av'rice, that make man a wolf to man ;
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats,
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flow'r to flow'r, so he from land to land ;
The manners, customs, policy, of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans ;
He sucks intelligence in ev'ry clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return — a rich repast for me.
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes ;
While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.
O Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,

Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapp'd in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urg'd by storms along it's slipp'ry way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art ! Thou hold'st the Sun
A pris'ner in the yet undawning east,
Short'ning his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west ; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gath'ring, at short notice, in one group
The family dispers'd, and fixing thought,
Not less dispers'd by daylight and it's cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturb'd Retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted ev'ning, know.
No rattling wheels stop short before these gates ;
No powder'd pert, proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors
Till the street rings ; no stationary steeds
Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake :
But here the needle plies it's busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flow'r,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,

Unfolds it's bosom ; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully dispos'd,
Follow the nimble finger of the fair ;
A wreath, that cannot fade, of flow'rs, that blow
With most success when all besides decay.
The poet's or historian's page by one
Made vocal for th' amusement of the rest ;
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out ;
And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,
And in the charming strife triumphant still ;
Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
On female industry : the threaded steel
Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds.
The volume clos'd, the customary rites
Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal ;
Such as the mistress of the world once found
Delicious, when her patriots of high note,
Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,
And under an old oak's domestic shade,
Enjoy'd, spare feast ! a radish and an egg.
Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,
Nor such as with a frown forbids the play
Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth :
Nor do we madly, like an impious world,
Who deem religion phrenzy, and the God,
That made them, an intruder on their joys,
Start at his awful name, or deem his praise
A jarring note. Themes of a graver tone,
Exciting oft our gratitude and love,
While we retrace with Mem'ry's pointing wand,
That calls the past to our exact review,

The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,
The disappointed foe, deliv'rance found
Unlook'd for, life preserv'd, and peace restor'd,
Fruits of omnipotent eternal love.

"O ev'nings worthy of the gods!" exclaim'd
The Sabine bard. O ev'nings, I reply,
More to be priz'd and coveted than yours,
As more illumin'd, and with nobler truths,
That I, and mine, and those we love, enjoy.

Is Winter hideous in a garb like this?
Needs he the tragic fur, the smoke of lamps,
The pent-up breath of an unsav'ry throng,
To thaw him into feeling; or the smart
And snappish dialogue, that flippant wits
Call comedy, to prompt him with a smile?
The self-complacent actor, when he views
(Stealing a sidelong glance at a full house)
The slope of faces, from the floor to th' roof
(As if one master-spring controll'd them all)
Relax'd into a universal grin,
Sees not a count'nance there, that speaks of joy
Half so refin'd or so sincere as ours.
Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks,
That idleness has ever yet contriv'd
To fill the void of an unfurnish'd brain,
To palliate Dulness and give Time a shove.
Time, as he passes us, has a dove's wing
Unsoil'd, and swift, and of a silken sound;
But the World's Time is Time in masquerade!
Theirs, should I paint him, has his pinions fledg'd
With motley plumes; and, where the peacock shows
His azure eyes, is tinctur'd black and red

With spots quadrangular of diamond form,
Ensanguin'd hearts, clubs typical of strife,
And spades, the emblem of untimely graves.
What should be, and what was an hour-glass once,
Becomes a dice-box, and a billiard mace
Well does the work of his destructive sith.
Thus deck'd, he charms a world whom fashion blinds
To his true worth, most pleas'd when idle most ;
Whose only happy are their wasted hours.
Ev'n misses, at whose age their mothers wore
The backstring and the bib, assume the dress
Of womanhood, fit pupils in the school
Of card-devoted Time, and night by night
Plac'd at some vacant corner of the board,
Learn ev'ry trick, and soon play all the game.
But truce with censure. Roving as I rove,
Where shall I find an end, or how proceed ?
As he that travels far oft turns aside,
To view some rugged rock or mould'ring tow'r,
Which seen delights him not ; then coming home
Describes and prints it, that the world may know
How far he went for what was nothing worth ;
So I, with brush in hand and pallet spread,
With colours mix'd for a far diff'rent use,
Paint cards and dolls, and ev'ry idle thing,
That Fancy finds in her excursive flights.
Come, Ev'ning, once again, season of peace ;
Return, sweet Ev'ning, and continue long !
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron step slow moving, while the Night
Treads on thy sweeping train ; one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose

On bird and beast, the other charg'd for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day :
Not sumptuously adorn'd, not needing aid,
Like homely-featur'd Night, of clust'ring gems ;
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee ; save that the Moon is thine
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift :
And, whether I devote thy gentle hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil ;
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit ;
Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
When they command whom man was born to
please ;

I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
Goliah, might have seen his giant bulk
Whole without stooping, tow'ring crest and all,
My pleasures, too, begin. But me perhaps
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadows to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quiv'ring flame.
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight : such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,

The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indispos'd alike to all.
Laugh, ye who boast your more mercurial pow'rs,
That never felt a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one ; I am conscious, and confess
Fearless a soul, that does not always think.
Me oft has Fancy ludicrous and wild
Sooth'd with a waking dream of houses, tow'rs,
Trees, churches, and strange visages, express'd
In the red cinders, while with poring eye
I gaz'd, myself creating what I saw.
Nor less amus'd have I quiescent watch'd
The sooty films, that play upon the bars
Pendulous, and foreboding in the view
Of superstition, prophesying still,
Though still deceiv'd, some stranger's near approach.
'T is thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought,
And sleeps and is refresh'd. Meanwhile the face
Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
Of deep deliberation, as the man
Were task'd to his full strength, absorb'd and lost.
Thus oft reclin'd at ease, I lose an hour
At ev'ning, till at length the freezing blast,
That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
The recollected pow'rs, and snapping short
The glassy threads, with which the Fancy weaves
Her brittle toils, restores me to myself.
How calm is my recess ; and how the frost,
Raging abroad, and the rough wind endear
The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within !
I saw the woods and fields at close of day

A variegated show ; the meadows green,
Though faded ; and the lands, where lately wav'd
The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
Upturn'd so lately by the forceful share.
I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
With verdure not unprofitable, graz'd
By flocks, fast feeding, and selecting each
His fav'rite herb ; while all the leafless groves,
That skirt th' horizon, wore a sable hue,
Scarce notic'd in the kindred dusk of eve.
To-morrow brings a change, a total change !
Which even now, though silently perform'd,
And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
Of universal nature undergoes.
Fast falls a fleecy show'r : the downy flakes
Descending, and with never-ceasing lapse,
Softly alighting upon all below,
Assimilate all objects. Earth receives
Gladly the thick'ning mantle ; and the green
And tender blade, that fear'd the chilling blast,
Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
Finds happiness unblighted, or, if found,
Without some thistly sorrow at it's side ;
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguish'd than ourselves ; that thus
We may with patience bear our mod'rate ills,
And sympathise with others suff'ring more.
Ill fares the trav'ller now, and he that stalks
In pond'rous boots beside his reeking team.
The wain goes heavily impeded sore

By congregated loads adhering close
To the clogg'd wheels; and in it's sluggish pace
Noiseless appears a moving hill of snow.
The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
While ev'ry breath, by respiration strong
Forc'd downward, is consolidated soon
Upon their jutting chests. He, form'd to bear
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
With half-shut eyes, and pucker'd cheeks, and teeth
Presented bare against the storm, plods on.
One hand secures his hat, save when with both
He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
O happy; and in my account denied
That sensibility of pain, with which
Refinement is endu'd, thrice happy thou!
Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed
The piercing cold, but feels it unimpair'd.
The learned finger never need explore
Thy vig'rous pulse; and the unhealthful east,
That breathes the spleen, and searches ev'ry bone
Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
Thy days roll on exempt from household care;
Thy waggon is thy wife; and the poor beasts,
That drag the dull companion to and fro,
Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.
Ah treat them kindly! rude as thou appear'st,
Yet show that thou hast mercy! which the great,
With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,
Humane as they would seem, not always show.

Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat,
Such claim compassion in a night like this,

And have a friend in ev'ry feeling heart.
Warm'd, while it lasts, by labour, all day long
They brave the season, and yet find at eve,
Ill clad, and fed but sparely, time to cool.
The frugal housewife trembles when she lights
Her scanty stock of brushwood, blazing clear,
But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys.
The few small embers left she nurses well ;
And, while her infant race, with outspread hands,
And crowded knees, sit cowering o'er the sparks,
Retires, content to quake, so they be warm'd.
The man feels least, as more inur'd than she
To winter, and the current in his veins
More briskly mov'd by his severer toil ;
Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs.
The taper soon extinguish'd, which I saw
Dangled along at the cold finger's end
Just when the day declin'd ; and the brown loaf
Lodg'd on the shelf, half eaten without sauce
Of sav'ry cheese, or butter, costlier still ;
Sleep seems their only refuge : for, alas !
Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd,
And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few !
With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care,
Ingenious Parsimony takes, but just
Saves the small inventory, bed, and stool,
Skillet, and old carv'd chest, from public sale.
They live, and live without extorted alms
From grudging hands ; but other boast have none,
To soothe their honest pride, that scorns to beg,
Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.
I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,

For ye are worthy ; choosing rather far
A dry but independent crust, hard earn'd,
And eaten with a sigh, than to endure
The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
Of knaves in office, partial in the work
Of distribution ; lib'ral of their aid
To clam'rous Importunity in rags,
But oft-times deaf to suppliants, who would blush
To wear a tatter'd garb however coarse,
Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth :
These ask with painful shyness, and, refus'd
Because deserving, silently retire !
But be ye of good courage ! Time itself
Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase ;
And all your num'rous progeny, well-train'd
But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,
And labour too. Meanwhile ye shall not want
What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,
Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send.
I mean the man, who, when the distant poor
Need help, denies them nothing but his name.
But poverty with most, who whimper forth
Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe ;
The effect of laziness or sottish waste.
Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
For plunder ; much solicitous how best
He may compensate for a day of sloth,
By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.
Woe to the gard'ner's pale, the farmer's hedge,
Plash'd neatly, and secur'd with driven stakes
Deep in the loamy bank. Uptorn by strength,
Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame

To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil,
An ass's burden, and, when laden most
And heaviest, light of foot steals fast away.
Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
The well-stack'd pile of riven logs and roots
From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave
Unwrench'd the door, however well secur'd,
Where Chanticleer amidst his haram sleeps
In unsuspecting pomp. 'Twitch'd from the perch,
He gives the princely bird, with all his wives,
To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,
And loudly wond'ring at the sudden change.
Nor this to feed his own. 'T were some excuse,
Did pity of their suff'rings warp aside
His principle, and tempt him into sin
For their support, so destitute. But they
Neglected pine at home ; themselves, as more
Expos'd than others, with less scruple made
His victims, robb'd of their defenceless all.
Cruel is all he does. 'T is quenchless thirst
Of ruinous ebriety, that prompts
His ev'ry action, and imbrutes the man.
O for a law to noose the villain's neck,
Who starves his own ; who persecutes the blood
He gave them in his children's veins, and hates
And wrongs the woman, he has sworn to love !

Pass where we may, through city or through town,
Village, or hamlet, of this merry land,
Though lean and beggar'd, ev'ry twentieth pace
Conducts th' unguarded nose to such a whiff
Of stale debauch, forth-issuing from the styes,
That law has licens'd, as makes Temp'rance reel.

There sit, involv'd and lost in curling clouds
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
The lackey, and the groom : the craftsman there
Takes a Lethean leave of all his toil ;
Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
And he that kneads the dough ; all loud alike,
All learned, and all drunk ! The fiddle screams
Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wail'd
It's wasted tones and harmony unheard :
Fierce the dispute whate'er the theme ; while she,
Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,
Perch'd on the sign-post, holds with even hand
Her undecisive scales. In this she lays
A weight of ignorance ; in that, of pride ;
And smiles delighted with the eternal poise.
Dire is the frequent curse, and it's twin sound,
The cheek-distending oath, not to be prais'd
As ornamental, musical, polite,
Like those which modern senators employ,
Whose oath is rhet'ric, and who swear for fame !
Behold the schools, in which plebeian minds
Once simple are initiated in arts,
Which some may practise with politer grace,
But none with readier skill ! — 'T' is here they learn
The road, that leads from competence and peace
To indigence and rapine ; till at last
Society, grown weary of the load,
Shakes her incumber'd lap, and casts them out.
But censure profits little : vain th' attempt
To advertise in verse a public pest,
That, like the filth with which the peasant feeds
His hungry acres, stinks, and is of use.

Th' Excise is fatten'd with the rich result
Of all this riot ; and ten thousand casks,
For ever dribbling out their base contents,
Touch'd by the Midas finger of the state,
Bleed gold for ministers to sport away.
Drink, and be mad then ; 't is your country bids !
Gloriously drunk, obey th' important call !
Her cause demands th' assistance of your throats ;—
Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more.

Would I had fall'n upon those happier days,
That poets celebrate ; those golden times,
And those Arcadian scenes, that Maro sings,
And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.
Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts,
That felt their virtues : Innocence, it seems,
From courts dismiss'd, found shelter in the groves ;
The footsteps of Simplicity, impress'd
Upon the yielding herbage, (so they sing,)
Then were not all effac'd : then speech profane,
And manners profligate, were rarely found,
Observ'd as prodigies, and soon reclaim'd.
Vain wish ! those days were never : airy dreams
Sat for the picture : and the poet's hand,
Imparting substance to an empty shade,
Impos'd a gay delirium for a truth.
Grant it : I still must envy them an age,
That favour'd such a dream ; in days like these
Impossible, when Virtue is so scarce,
That to suppose a scene where she presides,
Is tramontane, and stumbles all belief.
No : we are polish'd now. The rural lass,
Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,

Her artless manners, and her neat attire,
So dignified, that she was hardly less
Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,
Is seen no more. The character is lost !
Her head, adorn'd with lappets pinn'd aloft,
And ribands streaming gay, superbly rais'd,
And magnified beyond all human size,
Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
For more than half the tresses it sustains ;
Her elbows ruffled, and her tott'ring form
Ill-propp'd upon French heels ; she might be deem'd
(But that the basket dangling on her arm
Interprets her more truly) of a rank
Too proud for dairy work, or sale of eggs.
Expect her soon with footboy at her heels,
No longer blushing for her awkward load,
Her train and her umbrella all her care !

The town has ting'd the country ; and the stain
Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,
The worse for what it soils. The fashion runs
Down into scenes still rural ; but, alas !
Scenes rarely grac'd with rural manners now !
Time was when in the pastoral retreat
Th' unguarded door was safe ; men did not watch
T' invade another's right, or guard their own.
Then sleep was undisturb'd by fear, unscar'd
By drunken howlings ; and the chilling tale
Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.
But farewell now to unsuspicious nights,
And slumbers unalarm'd ! Now, ere you sleep,
See that your polish'd arms be prim'd with care,

And drop the nightbolt ; — ruffians are abroad ;
And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear
To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.
Ev'n daylight has its dangers ; and the walk [once
Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious
Of other tenants than melodious birds,
Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold.
Lamented change ! to which full many a cause
Invet'rate, hopeless of a cure, conspires.
The course of human things from good to ill,
From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails.
Increase of pow'r begets increase of wealth ;
Wealth, luxury ; and luxury, excess ;
Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague,
That seizes first the opulent, descends
To the next rank contagious, and in time
Taints downwards all the graduated scale
Of order, from the chariot to the plough.
The rich, and they, that have an arm to check
The licence of the lowest in degree,
Desert their office ; and themselves, intent
On pleasure, haunt the capital, and thus
To all the violence of lawless hands
Resign the scenes, their presence might protect.
Authority herself not seldom sleeps,
Though resident, and witness of the wrong.
The plump convivial parson often bears
The magisterial sword in vain, and lays
His rev'rence and his worship both to rest
On the same cushion of habitual sloth.
Perhaps timidity restrains his arm ;

When he should strike he trembles, and sets free,
Himself enslav'd by terrour of the band,
Th' audacious convict, whom he dares not bind.
Perhaps, though by profession ghostly pure,
He, too, may have his vice, and sometimes prove
Less dainty than becomes his grave outside
In lucrative concerns. Examine well
His milk-white hand ; the palm is hardly clean —
But here and there an ugly smutch appears.
Foh ! 't was a bribe that left it : he has touch'd
Corruption. Whoso seeks an audit here
Propitious, pays his tribute, game or fish,
Wild-fowl or ven'son ; and his errand speeds.

But faster far, and more than all the rest,
A noble cause, which none, who bears a spark
Of public virtue, ever wish'd remov'd,
Works the deplor'd and mischievous effect.
'T is universal soldiership has stabb'd
The heart of merit in the meaner class.
Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage
Of those that bear them, in whatever cause,
Seem most at variance with all moral good,
And incompatible with serious thought.
The clown, the child of Nature, without guile,
Blest with an infant's ignorance of all
But his own simple pleasures ; now and then
A wrestling match, a foot-race, or a fair ;
Is ballotted, and trembles at the news :
Sheepish he doffs his hat, and mumbling swears
A Bible-oath to be whate'er they please,
To do he knows not what. The task perform'd,
That instant he becomes the sergeant's care,

His pupil, and his torment, and his jest.
His awkward gait, his introverted toes,
Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,
Procure him many a curse. By slow degrees,
Unapt to learn, and form'd of stubborn stuff,
He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,
Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well :
He stands erect ; his slouch becomes a walk ;
He steps right onward, martial in his air,
His form, and movement ; is as smart above
As meal and larded locks can make him ; wears
His hat, or his plum'd helmet, with a grace ;
And, his three years of heroship expir'd,
Returns indignant to the slighted plough.
He hates the field, in which no fife or drum
Attends him ; drives his cattle to a march ;
And sighs for the smart comrades he has left.
'T were well if his exterior change were all —
But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost
His ignorance and harmless manners too.
'To swear, to game, to drink ; to show at home
By lewdness, idleness, and Sabbath-breach,
'The great proficiency he made abroad ;
'T astonish and to grieve his gazing friends ;
To break some maiden's and his mother's heart ;
To be a pest where he was useful once ;
Are his sole aim, and all his glory, now.

Man in society is like a flow'r
Blown in it's native bed : 't is there alone
His faculties, expanded in full bloom,
Shine out ; there only reach their proper use.
But man, associated and leagu'd with man

By regal warrant, or self-join'd by bond
For int'rest-sake, or swarming into clans
Beneath one head for purposes of war,
Like flow'rs selected from the rest, and bound
And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
Fades rapidly, and, by compression marr'd,
Contracts defilement not to be endur'd.
Hence charter'd boroughs are such public plagues;
And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
In all their private functions, once combin'd,
Become a loathsome body, only fit
For dissolution, hurtful to the main.
Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
Against the charities of domestic life,
Incorporated seem at once to lose
Their nature; and, disclaiming all regard
For mercy and the common rights of man,
Build factories with blood, conducting trade
At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
Of innocent commercial Justice red.
Hence too the field of glory, as the world
Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
With all its majesty of thund'ring pomp,
Enchanting music and immortal wreaths,
Is but a school, where thoughtlessness is taught
On principle, where foppery atones
For folly, gallantry for ev'ry vice.

But slighted as it is, and by the great
Abandon'd, and, which still I more regret,
Infected with the manners and the modes,
It knew not once, the country wins me still.
I never fram'd a wish, or form'd a plan,

That flatter'd me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene. There early stray'd
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free.
My very dreams were rural ; rural too
The first-born efforts of my youthful Muse,
Sportive and jingling her poetic bells,
Ere yet her ear was mistress of their pow'rs.
No bard could please me but whose lyre was tun'd
To Nature's praises. Heroes and their feats
Fatigu'd me, never weary of the pipe
Of Tityrus, assembling, as he sang,
The rustic throng beneath his fav'rite beech.
Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms :
New to my taste his Paradise surpass'd
The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
To speak it's excellence. I danc'd for joy.
I marvell'd much that at so ripe an age
As twice seven years, his beauties had then first
Engag'd my wonder ; and admiring still,
And still admiring, with regret suppos'd
The joy half lost, because not sooner found.
There, too, enamour'd of the life I lov'd,
Pathetic in it's praise, in it's pursuit
Determin'd, and possessing it at last
With transports, such as favour'd lovers feel,
I studied, priz'd, and wish'd that I had known,
Ingenuous Cowley ! and, though now reclaim'd
By modern lights from an erroneous taste,
I cannot but lament thy splendid wit
Entangled in the cobwebs of the schools.
I still revere thee, courtly though retir'd ;

Though stretch'd at ease in Chertsey's silent bow'rs,
Not unemploy'd ; and finding rich amends
For a lost world in solitude and verse.

'T is born with all : the love of Nature's works
Is an ingredient in the compound man,
Infus'd at the creation of the kind.

And, though th' Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each, by strokes
And touches of his hand, with so much art
Diversified, that two were never found
Twins at all points — yet this obtains in all,
That all discern a beauty in his works, [form'd
And all can taste them : minds, that have been
And tutor'd, with a relish more exact,
But none without some relish, none unmov'd.

It is a flame, that dies not even there,
Where nothing feeds it : neither business, crowds,
Nor habits of luxurious city life,

Whatever else they smother of true worth
In human bosoms, quench it or abate.

The villas, with which London stands begirt,
Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,
Prove it. A breath of unadult'rate air,

The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer
The citizen, and brace his languid frame !

Ev'n in the stifling bosom of the town

A garden, in which nothing thrives, has charms,
That soothe the rich possessor ; much consol'd,
That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,
Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well

He cultivates. These serve him with a hint,
That Nature lives ; that sight-refreshing green

Is still the liv'ry she delights to wear,
Though sickly samples of th' exub'rant whole.
What are the casements lin'd with creeping herba,
The prouder sashes fronted with a range
Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
The Frenchman's darling? * are they not all proofs,
That man, immur'd in cities, still retains
His inborn inextinguishable thirst
Of rural scenes, compensating his loss
By supplemental shifts, the best he may?
The most unfurnish'd with the means of life,
And they, that never pass their brick-wall bounds,
To range the fields, and treat their lungs with air,
Yet feel the burning instinct: over head
Suspend their crazy boxes, planted thick,
And water'd duly. There the pitcher stands
A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there;
Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets
The country, with what ardour he contrives
A peep at Nature, when he can no more.

Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease,
And contemplation, heart-consoling joys,
And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode
Of multitudes unknown; hail, rural life!
Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honours or emolument, or fame;
I shall not add myself to such a chase,
Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.
Some must be great. Great offices will have
Great talents. And God gives to ev'ry man

* Mignonnette.

'The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
'That lifts him into life, and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordain'd to fill.
To the deliv'rer of an injur'd land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, a heart
'To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs ;
To monarchs dignity ; to judges sense ;
'To artists ingenuity and skill ;
'To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long
Found here that leisure and that ease I wish'd.

Book V.

*THE WINTER-MORNING WALK.**Argument.*

A frosty morning. The foddering of cattle. The woodman and his dog. The poultry. Whimsical effects of frost at a waterfall. The Empress of Russia's palace of ice. Amusements of monarchs. War, one of them. Wars, whence ; and whence monarchy. The evils of it. English and French loyalty contrasted. The Bastille, and a prisoner there. Liberty the chief recommendation of this country. Modern patriotism questionable, and why. The perishable nature of the best human institutions. Spiritual liberty not perishable. The slavish state of man by nature. Deliver him, Deist, if you can. Grace must do it. The respective merits of patriots and martyrs stated. Their different treatment. Happy freedom of the man whom grace makes free. His relish of the works of God. Address to the Creator.

'T is morning ; and the Sun, with ruddy orb
Ascending, fires th' horizon ; while the clouds,
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the disk emerges more,
Resemble most some city in a blaze,
Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
From ev'ry herb and ev'ry spiry blade
Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field.
Mine, spindling into longitude immense,
In spite of gravity, and sage remark
'That I myself am but a fleeting shade,
Provokes me to a smile. With eye askance
I view the muscular proportion'd limb
Transform'd to a lean shank. The shapeless pair,
As they design'd to mock me, at my side
Take step for step ; and, as I near approach
The cottage, walk along the plaster'd wall,
Prepost'rous sight ! the legs without the mar.
The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge ; and the bents,
And coarser grass, upspearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and in bright apparel clad,
And, fledg'd with icy feathers, nod superb.
The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep
In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
Their wonted fodder ; not like hung'ring man,
Fretful if unsupplied ; but silent, meek,

And patient of the slow-pac'd swain's delay.
He from the stack carves out th' accustom'd load,
Deep plunging, and again deep plunging oft,
His broad keen knife into the solid mass :
Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,
With such undeviating and even force
He severs it away : no heedless care,
Lest storms should overset the leaning pile
Deciduous, or it's own unbalanc'd weight.
Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd
The cheerful haunts of man ; to wield the axe,
And drive the wedge, in yonder forest drear,
From morn to eve his solitary task.
Shaggy, and lean, and shrewd, with pointed ears,
And tail cropp'd short, half lurcher and half cur,
His dog attends him. Close behind his heel
Now creeps he slow ; and now, with many a frisk
Wide-scamp'ring, snatches up the drifted snow
With iv'ry teeth, or plows it with his snout ;
'Then shakes his powder'd coat, and barks for joy.
Heedless of all his pranks, the sturdy churl
Moves right toward the mark ; nor stops for aught,
But now and then with pressure of his thumb
'T' adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube,
That fumes beneath his nose ; the trailing cloud
Streams far behind him, scenting all the air.
Now from the roost, or from the neighb'ring pale,
Where, diligent to catch the first faint gleam
Of smiling day, they gossip'd side by side,
Come trooping at the housewife's well-known call
The feather'd tribes domestic. Half on wing,
And half on foot, they brush the fleecy flood,

Conscious and fearful of too deep a plunge.
The sparrows peep, and quit the shelt'ring caves,
To seize the fair occasion ; well they eye
The scatter'd grain, and thievishly resolv'd
T' escape th' impending famine, often scar'd
As oft return, a pert voracious kind.
Clean riddance quickly made, one only care
Remains to each, the search of sunny nook,
Or shed impervious to the blast. Resign'd
To sad necessity, the cock foregoes
His wonted strut ; and, wading at their head
With well-consider'd steps, seems to resent
His alter'd gait and stateliness retrench'd.
How find the myriads, that in summer cheer
The hills and valleys with their ceaseless songs,
Due sustenance, or where subsist they now ? [safe
Earth yields them nought ; th' imprison'd worm is
Beneath the frozen clod ; all seeds of herbs
Lie cover'd close ; and berry-bearing thorns,
That feed the thrush, (whatever some suppose,)
Afford the smaller minstrels no supply.
The long protracted rigour of the year,
Thins all their num'rous flocks. In chinks and holes
Ten thousand seek an unmolested end,
As instinct prompts ; self-buried ere they die.
The very rooks and daws forsake the fields,
Where neither grub, nor root, nor earth-nut, now
Repays their labour more ; and perch'd aloft
By the wayside, or stalking in the path,
Lean pensioners upon the trav'ller's track,
Pick up their nauseous dole, though sweet to them,
Of voided pulse or half-digested grain.

The streams are lost amid the splendid blank,
O'erwhelming all distinction. On the flood,
Indurated and fix'd, the snowy weight
Lies undissolv'd ; while silently beneath,
And unperceiv'd, the current steals away.
Not so where, scornful of a check, it leaps
The mill-dam, dashes on the restless wheel,
And wantons in the pebbly gulf below :
No frost can bind it there ; it's utmost force
Can but arrest the light and smoky mist,
That in it's fall the liquid sheet throws wide.
And see where it has hung th' embroider'd banks
With forms so various, that no pow'rs of art,
The pencil or the pen, may trace the scene !
Here glitt'ring turrets rise, upbearing high
(Fantastic mis-arrangement !) on the roof
Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees
And shrubs of fairy land. The crystal drops,
That trickle down the branches, fast congeal'd,
Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
And prop the pile, they but adorn'd before.
Here grotto within grotto safe defies
The sun-beam ; there, emboss'd and fretted wild,
The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes
Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain
The likeness of some object seen before.
Thus Nature works as if to mock at Art,
And in defiance of her rival pow'rs ;
By these fortuitous and random strokes
Performing such inimitable feats,
As she with all her rules can never reach.
Less worthy of applause, though more admir'd,

Because a novelty, the work of man,
Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ,
Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,
The wonder of the North. No forest fell,
When thou would'st build ; no quarry sent it's stores
To enrich thy walls : but thou didst hew the floods,
And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
In such a palace Aristæus found
Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
Of his lost bees to her maternal ear :
In such a palace Poetry might place
The armory of Winter ; where his troops,
The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet,
Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,
And snow, that often blinds the traveller's course,
And wraps him in an unexpected tomb.
Silently as a dream the fabric rose ;
No sound of hammer or of saw was there :
Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
Than water interfus'd to make them one.
Lamps gracefully dispos'd, and of all hues,
Illumin'd ev'ry side : a wat'ry light
Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
Another moon new ris'n, or meteor fall'n
From Heav'n to Earth, of lambent flame serene.
So stood the brittle prodigy ; though smooth
And slipp'ry the materials, yet frost-bound
Firm as a rock. Nor wanted aught within,
That royal residence might well befit,
For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths
Of flow'rs, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,

Blush'd on the pannels. Mirror needed none
Where all was vitreous ; but in order due
Convivial table and commodious seat
(What seem'd at least commodious seat) were there ;
Sofa, and couch, and high-built throne august.
'The same lubricity was found in all,
And all was moist to the warm touch ; a scene
Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
And soon to slide into a stream again.
Alas ! 't was but a mortifying stroke
Of undesign'd severity, that glanc'd
(Made by a monarch) on her own estate,
Of human grandeur and the courts of kings.
'T was transient in it's nature, as in show
'T was durable ; as worthless, as it seem'd
Intrinsically precious ; to the foot
'Treach'rous and false ; it smil'd, and it was cold.

Great princes have great playthings. Some have
play'd

At hewing mountains into men, and some
At building human wonders mountain-high.
Some have amus'd the dull, sad years of life,
(Life spent in indolence, and therefore sad,)
With schemes of monumental fame ; and sought
By pyramids and mausolean pomp,
Short-liv'd themselves, t' immortalize their bones.
Some seek diversion in the tented field,
And make the sorrows of mankind their sport.
But war 's a game, which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at. Nations would do well,
T' extort their truncheons from the puny hands
Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds

Are gratified with mischief ; and who spoil,
Because men suffer it, their toy the World.

When Babel was confounded, and the great
Confed'racy of projectors wild and vain
Was split into diversity of tongues,
Then, as a shepherd separates his flock,
These to the upland, to the valley those,
God drave asunder, and assign'd their lot
To all the nations. Ample was the boon
He gave them, in it's distribution fair
And equal ; and he bade them dwell in peace.
Peace was awhile their care : they plow'd and
sow'd,

And reap'd their plenty without grudge or strife.
But violence can never longer sleep
Than human passions please. In ev'ry heart
Are sown the sparks that kindle fiery war ;
Occasion needs but fan them, and they blaze.
Cain had already shed a brother's blood :
The deluge wash'd it out ; but left unquench'd
The seeds of murder in the breast of man.
Soon by a righteous judgment in the line
Of his descending progeny was found
The first artificer of death ; the shrewd
Contriver, who first sweated at the forge,
And forc'd the blunt and yet unbloodied steel
To a keen edge, and made it bright for war.
Him, Tubal nam'd, the Vulcan of old times,
The sword and falchion their inventor claim ;
And the first smith was the first murd'rer's son.
His art surviv'd the waters ; and ere long,
When man was multiplied and spread abroad

In tribes and clans, and had begun to call
These meadows and that range of hills his own,
The tasted sweets of property begat
Desire of more ; and industry in some,
T' improve and cultivate their just demesne,
Made others covet what they saw so fair.
Thus war began on Earth : these fought for spoil,
And those in self-defence. Savage at first
The onset, and irregular. At length
One eminent above the rest for strength,
For stratagem, or courage, or for all,
Was chosen leader ; him they serv'd in war,
And him in peace, for sake of warlike deeds
Rev'renc'd no less. Who could with him compare?
Or who so worthy to control themselves,
As he, whose prowess had subdu'd their foes?
Thus war, affording field for the display
Of virtue, made one chief, whom times of peace,
Which have their exigencies too, and call
For skill in government, at length made king.
King was a name too proud for man to wear
With modesty and meekness ; and the crown
So dazzling in their eyes, who set it on,
Was sure t' intoxicate the brows it bound.
It is the abject property of most,
That, being parcel of the common mass,
And destitute of means to raise themselves,
They sink, and settle lower than they need.
They know not what it is to feel within
A comprehensive faculty, that grasps
Great purposes with ease, that turns and wields,
Almost without an effort, plans too vast

For their conception, which they cannot move.
Conscious of impotence they soon grow drunk
With gazing, when they see an able man
Step forth to notice ; and, besotted thus,
Build him a pedestal, and say, " Stand there,
And be our admiration and our praise."
They roll themselves before him in the dust,
Then most deserving in their own account,
When most extravagant in his applause,
As if exalting him they rais'd themselves.
Thus by degrees, self-cheated of their sound
And sober judgment, that he is but man,
They demi-deify and fume him so,
That in due season he forgets it too.
Inflated and astrut with self-conceit,
He gulps the windy diet ; and ere long,
Adopting their mistake, profoundly thinks
The World was made in vain, if not for him.
Thenceforth they are his cattle ; drudges, born
To bear his burdens, drawing in his gears,
And sweating in his service, his caprice
Becomes the soul, that animates them all.
He deems a thousand, or ten thousand lives,
Spent in the purchase of renown for him,
An easy reckoning ; and they think the same.
Thus kings were first invented, thus kings
Were burnish'd into heroes, and became
The arbiters of this terraqueous swamp ;
Storks among frogs, that have but croak'd and died.
Strange, that such folly, as lifts bloated man
To eminence fit only for a god,
Should ever drivel out of human lips,

Ev'n in the cradled weakness of the World '
Still stranger much, that when at length mankind
Had reach'd the sinewy firmness of their youth,
And could discriminate and argue well
On subjects more mysterious, they were yet
Babes in the cause of freedom, and should fear
And quake before the gods themselves had made ;
But above measure strange, that neither proof
Of sad experience, nor example set
By some, whose patriot virtue has prevail'd,
Can even now, when they are grown mature
In wisdom, and with philosophic deeds
Familiar, serve t' emancipate the rest !
Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone
To rev'rence what is ancient, and can plead
A course of long observance for its use,
That even servitude, the worst of ills,
Because deliver'd down from sire to son,
Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing.
But is it fit, or can it bear the shock
Of rational discussion, that a man,
Compounded and made up like other men
Of elements tumultuous, in whom lust
And folly in as ample measure meet,
As in the bosoms of the slaves he rules,
Should be a despot absolute, and boast
Himself the only freeman of his land ?
Should, when he pleases, and on whom he will,
Wage war, with any or with no pretence
Of provocation giv'n, or wrong sustain'd,
And force the beggarly last doit, by means
That his own humour dictates, from the clutch

Of Poverty, that thus he may procure
His thousands, weary of penurious life,
A splendid opportunity to die ?
Say ye, who (with less prudence than of old
Jotham ascrib'd to his assembled trees
In politic convention) put your trust
I' th' shadow of a bramble, and reclin'd
In fancied peace beneath his dang'rous branch,
Rejoice in him, and celebrate his sway,
Where find ye passive fortitude? Whence springs
Your self-denying zeal, that holds it good,
To stroke the prickly grievance, and to hang
His thorns with streamers of continual praise ?
We, too, are friends to loyalty. We love
The king who loves the law, respects his bounds,
And reigns content within them : him we serve
Freely and with delight, who leaves us free ;
But recollecting still, that he is man,
We trust him not too far. King though he be,
And king in England too, he may be weak,
And vain enough to be ambitious still ;
May exercise amiss his proper pow'rs,
Or covet more than freemen choose to grant :
Beyond that mark is treason. He is curs,
T' administer, to guard, t' adorn the state,
But not to warp or change it. We are his,
To serve him nobly in the common cause,
True to the death, but not to be his slaves.
Mark now the difference, ye that boast your love
Of kings, between your loyalty and ours.
We love the man, the paltry pageant you :
We the chief patron of the commonwealth,

You the regardless author of it's woes:
We for the sake of liberty a king,
You chains and bondage for a tyrant's sake.
Our love is principle, and has it's root
In reason, is judicious, manly, free ;
Yours, a blind instinct, crouches to the rod,
And licks the foot that treads it in the dust.
Were kingship as true treasure as it seems,
Sterling, and worthy of a wise man's wish,
I would not be a king to be belov'd
Causeless, and daub'd with undiscerning praise,
Where love is mere attachment to the throne,
Not to the man who fills it as he ought.

Whose freedom is by suff'rance, and at will
Of a superior, he is never free.
Who lives, and is not weary of a life
Expos'd to manacles, deserves them well.
The state that strives for liberty, though foil'd,
And forc'd to abandon what she bravely sought,
Deserves at least applause for her attempt,
And pity for her loss. But that's a cause
Not often unsuccessful : pow'r usurp'd,
Is weakness when oppos'd ; conscious of wrong,
'T is pusillanimous and prone to flight.
But slaves, that once conceive the glowing thought
Of freedom, in that hope itself possess
All that the contest calls for ; spirit, strength,
The scorn of danger, and united hearts ;
The surest presage of the good they seek.

Then shame to manhood, and opprobrious more
To France than all her losses and defeats,
Old or of later date, by sea or land,

Her house of bondage, worse than that of old
Which God aveng'd on Pharaoh — the Bastille.
Ye horrid tow'rs, th' abode of broken hearts ;
Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,
That monarchs have supplied from age to age
With music, such as suits their sov'reign ears,
The sighs and groans of miserable men !
There 's not an English heart, that would not leap,
To hear that ye were fall'n at last ; to know
That ev'n our enemies, so oft employ'd
In forging chains for us, themselves were free.
For he, who values Liberty, confines
His zeal for her predominance within
No narrow bounds ; her cause engages him
Wherever pleaded. 'T is the cause of man.
There dwell the most forlorn of human-kind,
Immur'd, though unaccus'd, condemn'd untried,
Cruelly spar'd, and hopeless of escape.
There, like the visionary emblem seen
By him of Babylon, life stands a stump,
And, filletted about with hoops of brass,
Still lives, though all his pleasant boughs are gone.
To count the hour-bell and expect no change ;
And ever, as the sullen sound is heard,
Still to reflect, that, though a joyless note
To him, whose moments all have one dull pace,
Ten thousand rovers in the World at large
Account it music ; that it summons some
To theatre, or jocund feast, or ball :
The wearied hireling finds it a release
From labour ; and the lover, who has chid
It's long delay, feels ev'ry welcome stroke

Upon his heart-strings, trembling with delight —
To fly for refuge from distracting thought
To such amusements, as ingenious woe
Contrives, hard-shifting, and without her tools —
To read engraven on the mouldy walls,
In stagg'ring types, his predecessor's tale,
A sad memorial, and subjoin his own —
To turn purveyor to an overgorg'd
And bloated spider, till the pamper'd pest
Is made familiar, watches his approach,
Comes at his call, and serves him for a friend —
To wear out time in numb'ring to and fro
The studs, that thick emboss his iron door ;
Then downward and then upward, then aslant,
And then alternate ; with a sickly hope
By dint of change to give his tasteless task
Some relish : till the sum, exactly found
In all directions, he begins again. —
Oh comfortless existence ! hemm'd around
With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel
And beg for exile, or the pangs of death ?
That man should thus encroach on fellow-man,
Abridge him of his just and native rights,
Eradicate him, tear him from his hold
Upon th' endearments of domestic life
And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,
And doom him for perhaps a heedless word
To barrenness, and solitude, and tears,
Moves indignation, makes the name of king
(Of king whom such prerogative can please)
As dreadful as the Manichean god,
Ador'd through fear, strong only to destroy.

'T is liberty alone, that gives the flow'r
Of fleeting life it's lustre and perfume ;
And we are weeds without it. All constraint,
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil: hurts the faculties, impedes
Their progress in the road of science ; blinds
The eyesight of Discov'ry ; and begets,
In those that suffer it, a sordid mind,
Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
To be the tenant of man's noble form.
Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,
With all thy loss of empire, and though squeez'd
By public exigence, till annual food
Fails for the craving hunger of the state,
Thee I account still happy, and the chief
Among the nations, seeing thou art free,
My native nook of earth ! Thy clime is rude,
Replete with vapours, and disposes much
All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine :
Thine unadult'rate manners are less soft
And plausible than social life requires,
And thou hast need of discipline and art,
To give thee what politer France receives
From nature's bounty — that humane address
And sweetness, without which no pleasure is
In converse, either starv'd by cold reserve,
Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl.
Yet being free I love thee : for the sake
Of that one feature can be well content,
Disgrac'd as thou hast been, poor as thou art,
To seek no sublunary rest beside.
But once enslav'd, farewell ! I could endure

Chains no-where patiently ; and chains at home,
Where I am free by birthright, not at all.
Then what were left of roughness in the grain
Of British natures, wanting it's excuse
That it belongs to freemen, would disgust
And shock me. I should then with double pain
Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime ;
And, if I must bewail the blessing lost,
For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,
I would at least bewail it under skies
Milder, among a people less austere ;
In scenes, which having never known me free,
Would not reproach me with the loss I felt.
Do I forbode impossible events,
And tremble at vain dreams ? Heav'n grant I may !
But th' age of virtuous politics is past,
And we are deep in that of cold pretence.
Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,
And we too wise to trust them. He that takes
Deep in his soft credulity the stamp
Design'd by loud declaimers on the part
Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,
Incurs derision for his easy faith,
And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough :
For when was public virtue to be found,
Where private was not ? Can he love the whole,
Who loves no part ? He be a nation's friend,
Who is in truth the friend of no man there ?
Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,
Who slights the charities, for whose dear sake
That country, if at all, must be belov'd ?
 'T is therefore sober and good men are sad

For England's glory, seeing it wax pale
And sickly, while her champions wear their hearts
So loose to private duty, that no brain,
Healthful and undisturb'd by factious fumes,
Can dream them trusty to the gen'ral weal.
Such were they not of old, whose temper'd blades
Dispers'd the shackles of usurp'd control,
And hew'd them link from link ; then Albion's sons
Were sons indeed ; they felt a filial heart
Beat high within them at a mother's wrongs ;
And, shining each in his domestic sphere,
Shone brighter still, once call'd to public view.
'T is therefore many, whose sequester'd lot
Forbids their interference, looking on,
Anticipate perforce some dire event ;
And, seeing the old castle of the state,
That promis'd once more firmness, so assail'd,
That all it's tempest-beaten turrets shake,
Stand motionless expectants of it's fall.
All has it's date below ; the fatal hour
Was register'd in Heav'n ere time began.
We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works
Die too : - the deep foundations that we lay,
Time plows them up, and not a trace remains.
We build with what we deem eternal rock :
A distant age asks where the fabric stood ;
And in the dust, sifted and search'd in vain,
The undiscoverable secret sleeps.

But there is yet a liberty unsung
By poets, and by senators unprais'd,
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the pow'rs
Of Earth and Hell confed'rate take away :

A liberty, which persecution, fraud,
Oppression, prisons, have no pow'r to bind ;
Which whoso tastes can be enslav'd no more.
'T is liberty of heart deriv'd from Heav'n,
Bought with HIS blood, who gave it to mankind,
And seal'd with the same token. It is held
By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure
By th' unimpeachable and awful oath
And promise of a God. His other gifts
All bear the royal stamp, that speaks them his,
And are august ; but this transcends them all.
His other works, the visible display
Of all-creating energy and might,
Are grand no doubt, and worthy of the word,
That, finding an interminable space
Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,
And made so sparkling what was dark before.
But these are not his glory. Man, 't is true,
Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene,
Might well suppose th' artificer divine
Meant it eternal, had he not himself
Pronounc'd it transient, glorious as it is,
And, still designing a more glorious far,
Doom'd it as insufficient for his praise.
These, therefore, are occasional, and pass ;
Form'd for the confutation of the fool,
Whose lying heart disputes against a God ;
That office serv'd, they must be swept away.
Not so the labours of his love : they shine
In other heav'ns than these that we behold,
And fade not. There is Paradise that fears
No forfeiture, and of it's fruits he sends

Large prelibation oft to saints below.
Oft these the first in order, and the pledge,
And confident assurance of the rest,
Is liberty ; a flight into his arms,
Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,
A clear escape from tyrannizing lust,
And full immunity from penal woe.

Chains are the portion of revolted man,
Stripes, and a dungeon ; and his body serves
The triple purpose. In that sickly, foul,
Opprobrious residence he finds them all.
Propense his heart to idols, he is held
In silly dotage on created things,
Careless of their Creator. And that low
And sordid gravitation of his pow'rs
To a vile clod so draws him, with such force
Resistless from the centre he should seek,
That he at last forgets it. All his hopes
Tend downward ; his ambition is to sink,
To reach a depth profounder still, and still
Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death.
But ere he gain the comfortless repose
He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul
In Heav'n-renouncing exile, he endures —
What does he not, from lusts oppos'd in vain,
And self-reproaching conscience ? He foresees
The fatal issue to his health, fame, peace,
Fortune, and dignity ; the loss of all,
That can ennoble man, and make frail life,
Short as it is, supportable. Still worse,
Far worse than all the plagues, with which his sins

Infect his happiest moments, he forebodes
Ages of hopeless misery. Future death,
And death still future. Not a hasty stroke,
Like that which sends him to the dusty grave ;
But unrepeatable enduring death.
Scripture is still a trumpet to his fears :
What none can prove a forgery may be true ;
What none but bad men wish exploded must.
That scruple checks him. Riot is not loud
Nor drunk enough to drown it. In the midst
Of laughter his compunctions are sincere ;
And he abhors the jest, by which he shines.
Remorse begets reform. His master-lust
Falls first before his resolute rebuke,
And seems dethron'd and vanquish'd. Peace ensues,
But spurious and short-liv'd ; the puny child
Of self congratulating Pride, begot
On fancied Innocence. Again he falls,
And fights again ; but finds his best essay
A presage ominous, portending still
It's own dishonour by a worse relapse.
Till Nature, unavailing Nature, foil'd
So oft, and wearied in the vain attempt,
Scoffs at her own performance. Reason now
Takes part with appetite, and pleads the cause
Perversely, which of late she so condemn'd ;
With shallow shifts and old devices, worn
And tatter'd in the service of debauch,
Cov'ring his shame from his offended sight.
“ Hath God, indeed, giv'n appetites to man,
And stor'd the Earth so plenteously with means,
To gratify the hunger of his wish ;

And doth he reprobate, and will he damn
The use of his own bounty? making first
So frail a kind, and then enacting laws
So strict, that less than perfect must despair?
Falsehood! which whoso but suspects of truth
Dishonours God, and makes a slave of man.
Do they themselves, who undertake for hire
The teacher's office, and dispense at large
Their weekly dole of edifying strains,
Attend to their own music? have they faith
In what with such solemnity of tone
And gesture they propound to our belief?
Nay — conduct hath the loudest tongue. The voice
Is but an instrument, on which the priest
May play what tune he pleases. In the deed,
The unequivocal, authentic deed,
We find sound argument, we read the heart."

Such reas'nings (if that name must needs belong
'T' excuses in which reason has no part)
Serve to compose a spirit well-inclin'd,
To live on terms of amity with vice,
And sin without disturbance. Often urg'd,
(As often as libidinous discourse
Exhausted, he resorts to solemn themes
Of theological and grave import,)
They gain at last his unreserv'd assent;
Till, harden'd his heart's temper in the forge
Of lust, and on the anvil of despair,
He slights the strokes of conscience. Nothing moves,
Or nothing much, his constancy in ill;
Vain tamp'ring has but foster'd his disease;
'T is desp'rate, and he sleeps the sleep of death.

Haste now, philosopher, and set him free.
Charm the deaf serpent wisely. Make him hear
Of rectitude and fitness, moral truth
How lovely, and the moral sense how sure,
Consulted and obey'd, to guide his steps
Directly to the FIRST AND ONLY FAIR.
Spare not in such a cause. Spend all the pow'rs
Of rant and rhapsody in virtue's praise :
Be most sublimely good, verbosely grand,
And with poetic trappings grace thy prose,
Till it outmantle all the pride of verse. —
Ah, tinkling cymbal, and high-sounding brass,
Smitten in vain ! such music cannot charm
The eclipse, that intercepts truth's heav'nly beam,
And chills and darkens a wide-wand'ring soul.
The STILL SMALL VOICE is wanted. He must speak,
Whose word leaps forth at once to it's effect ;
Who calls for things that are not, and they come.
Grace makes the slave a freeman. 'T is a change,
That turns to ridicule the turgid speech
And stately tone of moralists, who boast,
As if, like him of fabulous renown,
They had, indeed, ability to smooth
The shag of savage nature, and were each
An Orpheus, and omnipotent in song :
But transformation of apostate man
From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
Is work for Him that made him. He alone,
And he by means in philosophic eyes
Trivial and worthy of disdain, achieves
The wonder ; humanizing what is brute
In the lost kind, extracting from the lips

Of asps their venom, overpowering strength
By weakness, and hostility by love.

Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
Bled nobly ; and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompense. We give in charge
Their names to the sweet lyre. Th' historic Muse,
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
To latest times ; and Sculpture, in her turn,
Gives bond in stone and ever-during brass
To guard them, and t' immortalize her trust :
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
To those, who, posted at the shrine of Truth,
Have fall'n in her defence. A patriot's blood,
Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed,
And for a time ensure, to his lov'd land
The sweets of liberty and equal laws ;
But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim,
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.
Yet few remember them. They liv'd unknown,
Till Persecution dragg'd them into fame,
And chas'd them up to Heav'n. Their ashes flew
— No marble tells us whither. With their names
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song :
And History, so warm on meaner themes,
Is cold on this. She execrates, indeed,
The tyranny, that doom'd them to the fire,
But gives the glorious suff'ers little praise.

He is the freeman, whom the truth makes free.

And all are slaves beside. There 's not a chain,
That hellish foes, confed'rate for his harm,
Can wind around him, but he casts it off,
With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
He looks abroad into the varied field
Of nature, and though poor, perhaps, compar'd
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers. His t' enjoy
With a propriety that none can feel,
But who, with filial confidence inspir'd,
Can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say — " My father made them all !"
Are they not his by a peculiar right,
And by an emphasis of int'rest his,
Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love
That plann'd, and built, and still upholds, a world
So cloth'd with beauty for rebellious man ?
Yes — ye may fill your garments, ye that reap
The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
In senseless riot ; but ye will not find
In feast, or in the chase, in song or dance,
A liberty like his, who, unimpeach'd
Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
And has a richer use of yours than you.
He is indeed a freeman. Free by birth
Of no mean city ; plann'd or ere the hills
Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea

With all his roaring multitude of waves.
His freedom is the same in ev'ry state ;
And no condition of this changeful life,
So manifold in cares, whose ev'ry day
Brings it's own evil with it, makes it less :
For he has wings, that neither sickness, pain,
Nor penury, can cripple or confine.
No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
With ease, and is at large. Th' oppressor holds
His body bound ; but knows not what a range
His spirit takes unconscious of a chain ;
And that to bind him is a vain attempt,
Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

Acquaint thyself with God, if thou would'st taste
His works. Admitted once to his embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before :
Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart
Made pure shall relish with divine delight
'Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.
Brutes graze the mountain-top, with faces prone,
And eyes intent upon the scanty herb
It yields them ; or, recumbent on it's brow,
Ruminate heedless of the scene outspread
Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away
From inland regions to the distant main.
Man views it, and admires ; but rests content
With what he views. The landscape has his praise,
But not it's author. Unconcern'd who form'd
The Paradise he sees, he finds it such,
And, such well pleas'd to find it, asks no more.
Not so the mind, that has been touch'd from Heav'n,
And in the school of sacred wisdom taught,

To read his wonders, in whose thought the World,
Fair as it is, existed ere it was.

Not for it's own sake merely, but for his
Much more, who fashion'd it, he gives it praise ;
Praise that from Earth resulting, as it ought,
To Earth's acknowledg'd sovereign finds at once
It's only just proprietor in Him.

The soul that sees him or receives sublim'd
New faculties, or learns at least t' employ
More worthily the pow'rs she own'd before,
Discerns in all things what, with stupid gaze
Of ignorance, till then she overlook'd,
A ray of heavenly light, gilding all forms
Terrestrial in the vast and the minute ;
The unambiguous footsteps of the God,
Who gives it's lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.
Much conversant with Heav'n, she often holds
With those fair ministers of light to man,
That fill the skies nightly with silent pomp,
Sweet conference. Inquires what strains were they
With which Heav'n rang, when ev'ry star in haste
To gratulate the new-created Earth,
Sent forth a voice, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy. — “ Tell me, ye shining hosts,
That navigate a sea that knows no storms,
Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,
If from your elevation, whence ye view
Distinctly scenes invisible to man,
And systems, of whose birth no tidings yet
Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race
Favour'd as ours ; transgressors from the womb,

And hasting to a grave, yet doom'd to rise,
And to possess a brighter Heav'n than yours?
As one, who, long detain'd on foreign shores,
Pants to return, and when he sees afar
His country's weather-bleach'd and batter'd rocks,
From the green wave emerging, darts an eye
Radiant with joy towards the happy land ;
So I with animated hopes behold,
And many an aching wish, your beamy fires,
That show like beacons in the blue abyss,
Ordain'd to guide th' embodied spirit home
From toilsome life to never-ending rest.
Love kindles as I gaze. I feel desires,
That give assurance of their own success,
And that, infus'd from Heav'n, must thither tend."

So reads he nature, whom the lamp of truth
Illuminates. Thy lamp, mysterious Word !
Which whoso sees no longer wanders lost,
With intellects bemaz'd in endless doubt,
But runs the road of wisdom. Thou hast built
With means, that were not till by thee employ'd,
Worlds, that had never been hadst thou in strength
Been less, or less benevolent than strong.
They are thy witnesses, who speak thy pow'r
And goodness infinite, but speak in ears,
That hear not, or receive not their report.
In vain thy creatures testify of thee,
Till thou proclaim thyself. Theirs is indeed
A teaching voice ; but 't is the praise of thine,
That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,
And with the boon gives talents for it's use.
Till thou art heard, imaginations vain

Possess the heart, and fables false as Hell;
Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death
The uninform'd and heedless souls of men.
We give to chance, blind chance, ourselves as blind,
The glory of thy work ; which yet appears
Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,
Challenging human scrutiny, and prov'd
Then skilful most when most severely judg'd.
But chance is not ; or is not where thou reign'st :
Thy providence forbids that fickle pow'r
(If pow'r she be, that works but to confound)
To mix her wild vagaries with thy laws.
Yet thus we dote, refusing while we can
Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
Gods such as guilt makes welcome ; gods that sleep,
Or disregard our follies, or that sit
Amus'd spectators of this bustling stage.
Thee we reject, unable to abide
Thy purity, till pure as thou art pure,
Made such by thee, we love thee for that cause,
For which we shunn'd and hated thee before.
Then we are free. Then liberty, like day,
Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from Heav'n
Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.
A voice is heard, that mortal ears hear not,
Till thou hast touch'd them ; 't is the voice of song,
A loud Hosanna sent from all thy works ;
Which he that hears it with a shout repeats,
And adds his rapture to the gen'ral praise.
In that blest moment Nature, throwing wide
Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile
The author of her beauties, who, retir'd

Behind his own creation, works unseen
By the impure, and hears his pow'r denied.
Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, eternal Word!
From thee departing they are lost, and rove
At random without honour, hope, or peace.
From thee is all, that soothes the life of man,
His high endeavour, and his glad success,
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
But O thou bounteous giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown!
Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor;
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.

Book VI.

THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

Argument.

Bells at a distance. Their effect. A fine noon in winter. A sheltered walk. Meditation better than books. Our familiarity with the course of nature makes it appear less wonderful than it is. The transformation that Spring effects in a shrubbery described. A mistake concerning the course of nature corrected. God maintains it by an unremitted act. The amusements fashionable at this hour of the day reproved. Animals happy, a delightful sight. Origin of cruelty to animals. That it is a great crime proved from Scripture. That proof illustrated by a tale. A line drawn between the lawful and unlawful destruction of them. Their good and useful properties insisted on. Apology for the encomiums bestowed by

the author on animals. Instances of man's extravagant praise of man. The groans of the creation shall have an end. A view taken of the restoration of all things. An invocation and an invitation of Him, who shall bring it to pass. The retired man vindicated from the charge of uselessness. Conclusion.

THERE is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleas'd
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on!
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where Mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all it's pleasures and it's pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.
Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
It seem'd not always short; the rugged path,
And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn,
Mov'd many a sigh at it's disheart'ning length.
Yet feeling present evils, while the past
Faintly impress the mind, or not at all,
How readily we wish time spent revok'd,

That we might try the ground again, where once
(Through inexperience, as we now perceive)
We miss'd that happiness we might have found !
Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend,
A father, whose authority, in show
When most severe, and must'ring all it's force,
Was but the graver countenance of love ;
Whose favour, like the clouds of Spring, might low'r,
And utter now and then an awful voice,
But had a blessing in it's darkest frown,
Threat'ning at once and nourishing the plant.
We lov'd, but not enough, the gentle hand,
That rear'd us. At a thoughtless age, allur'd
By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounc'd
His shelt'ring side, and wilfully forewent
That converse, which we now in vain regret.
How gladly would the man recall to life
The boy's neglected sire ! a mother too,
That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still,
Might he demand them at the gates of death.
Sorrow has, since they went, subdu'd and tam'd
The playful humour ; he could now endure,
(Himself grown sober in the vale of tears,)
And feel a parent's presence no restraint.
But not to understand a treasure's worth,
Till time has stolen away the slighted good,
Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
And makes the world the wilderness it is.
The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,
And, seeking grace t' improve the prize they hold,
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

The night was Winter in his roughest mood ;

The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
The season smiles, resigning all it's rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
Without a cloud, and white without a speck
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale;
And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r,
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches over-arch the glade.
The roof, though moveable through all it's length
As the wind sways it, has yet well suffic'd,
And, intercepting in their silent fall
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The red-breast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppress'd:
Pleas'd with his solitude, and fitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And Learning wiser grow without his books.
Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-times no connection. Knowledge dwells

In heads replete with thoughts of other men ;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which Wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd, and squar'd, and fitted to it's place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much ;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
Books are not seldom talismans and spells,
By which the magic art of shrewder wits
Holds an unthinking multitude enthrall'd.
Some to the fascination of a name
Surrender judgment hood-wink'd. Some the style
Infatuates, and through labyrinths and wilds
Of error leads them, by a tune entranc'd.
While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
The insupportable fatigue of thought ;
And swallowing therefore without pause or choice
The total grist unsifted, husks and all.
But trees and rivulets, whose rapid course
Defies the check of Winter, haunts of deer,
And sheep-walks populous with bleating lambs,
And lanes, in which the primrose ere her time [root,
Peeps through the moss, that clothes the hawthorn
Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth,
Not shy, as in the world, and to be won
By slow solicitation, seize at once
The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.
What prodigies can pow'r divine perform
More grand than it produces year by year,
And all in sight of inattentive man ?
Familiar with the effect we slight the cause,

And in the constancy of nature's course,
And regular return of genial months,
And renovation of a faded world,
See nought to wonder at. Should God again,
As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
Of the undeviating and punctual sun,
How would the world admire ! but speaks it less
An agency divine, to make him know
His moment when to sink and when to rise,
Age after age, than to arrest his course ?
All we behold is miracle ; but, seen
So duly, all is miracle in vain.
Where now the vital energy, that mov'd,
While Summer was, the pure and subtle lymph
Through th' imperceptible meand'ring veins
Of leaf and flow'r ? It sleeps ; and th' icy touch
Of unprolific Winter has impress'd
A cold stagnation on th' intestine tide.
But let the months go round, a few short months,
And all shall be restor'd. These naked shoots,
Barren as lances, among which the wind
Makes wintry music, sighing as it goes,
Shall put their graceful foliage on again,
And more aspiring, and with ampler spread, [lost.
Shall boast new charms, and more than they have
Then each, in it's peculiar honours clad,
Shall publish even to the distant eye
It's family and tribe. Laburnum, rich
In streaming gold ; syringa, iv'ry pure ;
The scentless and the scented rose ; this red,
And of an humbler growth, the other * tall,

* The Guelder-rose.

And throwing up into the darkest gloom
Of neighb'ring cypress, or more sable yew,
Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf,
That the wind severs from the broken wave ;
The lilac, various in array, now white,
Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
With purple spikes pyramidal, as if
Studious of ornament, yet unresolv'd
Which hue she most approv'd, she chose them all ;
Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan,
But well compensating her sickly looks
With never-cloying odours, early and late ;
Hypericum, all bloom, so thick a swarm
Of flow'rs, like flies clothing her slender rods,
That scarce a leaf appears ; mezereon, too,
Though leafless, well attir'd, and thick beset
With blushing wreaths, investing ev'ry spray ;
Althæa with the purple eye ; the broom
Yellow and bright, as bullion unalloy'd,
Her blossoms ; and luxuriant above all
The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars. —
These have been, and these shall be in their day ;
And all this uniform uncolour'd scene
Shall be dismantled of it's fleecy load,
And flush into variety again.
From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
Is Nature's progress when she lectures man
In heav'nly truth ; evincing as she makes
The grand transition, that there lives and works

A soul in all things, and that soul is God.
The beauties of the wilderness are his,
That makes so gay the solitary place,
Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms,
That cultivation glories in, are his.
He sets the bright procession on it's way,
And marshals all the order of the year ;
He marks the bounds, which Winter may not pass,
And blunts his pointed fury ; in it's case,
Russet and rude, folds up the tender germ,
Uninjur'd, with inimitable art ;
And ere one flow'ry season fades and dies,
Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Some say, that in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements receiv'd a law,
From which they swerve not since. That under force
Of that controlling ordinance they move,
And need not his immediate hand, who first
Prescrib'd their course, to regulate it now.
Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
Th' incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
The great Artificer of all that moves
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted vigilance and care,
As too laborious and severe a task.
So man, the moth, is not afraid, it seems,
To span omnipotence, and measure might,
That knows no measure, by the scanty rule
And standard of his own, that is to-day,
And is not ere to-morrow's sun go down.
But how should matter occupy a charge,

Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
So vast in it's demands, unless impell'd
To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
And under pressure of some conscious cause?
The Lord of all, himself through all diffus'd,
Sustains, and is the life of all that lives.
Nature is but a name for an effect,
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire
By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
Who sleeps not, is not weary ; in whose sight
Slow-circling ages are as transient days ;
Whose work is without labour ; whose design
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts ;
And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.
Him blind antiquity profan'd, not serv'd,
With self-taught rites, and under various names,
Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
And Flora, and Vertumnus ; peopling Earth
With tutelary goddesses and gods,
That were not ; and commending as they would
To each some province, garden, field, or grove.
But all are under one. One spirit — His,
Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,
Rules universal nature. Not a flow'r
But shows some touch, in freckle, streak or stain,
Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odours, and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,
The forms, with which he sprinkles all the Earth.
Happy who walks with him ! whom what he finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,

Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade, that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God.
His presence, who made all so fair, perceiv'd
Makes all still fairer. As with him no scene
Is dreary, so with him all seasons please.
Though winter had been none, had man been true,
And Earth be punish'd for it's tenants' sake,
Yet not in vengeance; as this smiling sky,
So soon succeeding such an angry night,
And these dissolving snows, and this clear stream
Recov'ring fast it's liquid music, prove.

Who then, that has a mind well strung and tun'd
To contemplation, and within his reach
A scene so friendly to his fav'rite task,
Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,
His host of wooden warriors to and fro
Marching and countermarching, with an eye
As fix'd as marble, with a forehead ridg'd
And furrow'd into storms, and with a hand
Trembling, as if eternity were hung
In balance on his conduct of a pin?
Nor envies he aught more their idle sport,
Who pant with application misapplied
To trivial toys, and, pushing iv'ry balls
Across a velvet level, feel a joy
Akin to rapture, when the bauble finds
It's destin'd goal, of difficult access.
Nor deems he wiser him, who gives his noon
To Miss, the mercer's plague, from shop to shop
Wand'ring and litt'ring with unfolded silks

The polish'd counter, and approving none,
Or promising with smiles to call again.
Nor him, who by his vanity seduc'd,
And sooth'd into a dream that he discerns
The difference of a Guido from a daub,
Frequents the crowded auction : station'd there
As duly as the Langford of the show,
With glass at eye, and catalogue in hand,
And tongue accomplish'd in the fulsome cant
And pedantry, that coxcombs learn with ease ;
Oft as the price-deciding hammer falls,
He notes it in his book, then raps his box,
Swears 't is a bargain, rails at his hard fate,
That he has let it pass — but never bids.

Here unmolested, through whatever sign
The Sun proceeds, I wander. Neither mist,
Nor freezing sky nor sultry, checking me,
Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy.
Ev'n in the spring and play-time of the year,
That calls th' unwonted villager abroad
With all her little ones, a sportive train,
To gather kingcups in the yellow mead,
And prink their hair with daisies, or to pick
A cheap but wholesome sallad from the brook,
These shades are all my own. The tim'rous hare,
Grown so familiar with her frequent guest,
Scarce shuns me ; and the stockdove unalarm'd
Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends
His long love-ditty for my near approach.
Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm,
That age or injury has hollow'd deep,
Where, on his bed of wool and matted leaves,

He has outslept the Winter, ventures forth,
To frisk awhile, and bask in 'the warm sun,
The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play :
He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird, [brush,
Ascends the neighb'ring beech ; there whisks his
And perks his ears, and stamps, and cries aloud,
With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,
And anger insignificantly fierce.

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
For human fellowship, as being void
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
To love and friendship both, that is not pleas'd
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
The bounding fawn, that darts across the glade
When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
And spirits buoyant with excess of glee ;
The horse as wanton, and almost as fleet,
That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
Then stops, and snorts, and, throwing high his heels,
Starts to the voluntary race again ;
The very kine, that gambol at high noon,
The total herd receiving first from one,
That leads the dance, a summons to be gay,
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
Their efforts, yet resolv'd with one consent,
To give such act and utt'rance as they may
To ecstasy, too big to be suppress'd —
These, and a thousand images of bliss,
With which kind Nature graces ev'ry scene,
Where cruel man defeats not her design,
Impart to the benevolent, who wish

All that are capable of pleasure pleas'd,
A far superior happiness to theirs,
The comfort of a reasonable joy.

Man scarce had ris'n, obedient to his call,
Who form'd him from the dust, his future grave,
When he was crown'd as never king was since.
God set the diadem upon his head,
And angel choirs attended. Wond'ring stood
The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,
All happy, and all perfect in their kind,
The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts,
To see their sov'reign, and confess his sway.
Vast was his empire, absolute his pow'r,
Or bounded only by a law, whose force
'T was his sublimest privilege to feel
And own, the law of universal love.
He rul'd with meekness, they obey'd with joy ;
No cruel purpose lurk'd within his heart,
And no distrust of his intent in theirs.
So Eden was a scene of harmless sport,
Where kindness on his part, who rul'd the whole,
Begot a tranquil confidence in all,
And fear as yet was not, nor cause for fear.
But sin marr'd all ; and the revolt of man,
That source of evils not exhausted yet,
Was punish'd with revolt of his from him.
Garden of God, how terrible the change
Thy groves and lawns then witness'd ! Ev'ry heart,
Each animal, of ev'ry name, conceiv'd
A jealousy and an instinctive fear,
And, conscious of some danger, either fled
Precipitate the loath'd abode of man,

Or growl'd defiance in such angry sort,
As taught him too to tremble in his turn.
Thus harmony and family accord
Were driv'n from Paradise ; and in that hour
The seeds of cruelty, that since have swell'd
To such gigantic and enormous growth,
Were sown in human nature's fruitful soil.
Hence date the persecution and the pain,
That man inflicts on all inferior kinds,
Regardless of their plaints. To make him sport,
To gratify the phrenzy of his wrath,
Or his base gluttony, are causes good
And just in his account, why bird and beast
Should suffer torture, and the streams be dyed
With blood of their inhabitants impal'd.
Earth groans beneath the burden of a war
Wag'd with defenceless innocence, while he,
Not satisfied to prey on all around,
Adds tenfold bitterness of death by pangs
Needless, and first torments ere he devours.
Now happiest they, that occupy the scenes
The most remote from his abhorr'd resort,
Whom once, as delegate of God on Earth,
They fear'd, and as his perfect image lov'd.
The wilderness is theirs, with all it's caves,
It's hollow glens, it's thickets, and it's plains,
Unvisited by man. There they are free,
And howl and roar as likes them, uncontroll'd ;
Nor ask his leave to slumber or to play.
Woe to the tyrant, if he dare intrude
Within the confines of their wild domain :
The lion tells him — " I am monarch here " —

And, if he spare him, spares him on the terms
Of royal mercy, and through gen'rous scorn,
To rend a victim trembling at his foot.
In measure, as by force of instinct drawn,
Or by necessity constrain'd, they live
Dependent upon man ; those in his fields,
These at his crib, and some beneath his roof.
They prove too often at how dear a rate
He sells protection. — Witness at his foot
The spaniel, dying for some venial fault
Under dissection of the knotted scourge ;
Witness the patient ox, with stripes and yells
Driv'n to the slaughter, goaded, as he runs,
To madness ; while the savage at his heels
Laughs at the frantic suff'rer's fury, spent
Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown.
He too is witness, noblest of the train
That wait on man, the flight-performing horse ;
With unsuspecting readiness he takes
His murd'rer on his back, and, push'd all day
With bleeding sides and flanks, that heave for life,
To the far distant goal, arrives and dies.
So little mercy shows who needs so much !
Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,
Denounce no doom on the delinquent ? None.
He lives, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts
(As if barbarity were high desert)
Th' inglorious feat, and clamorous in praise
Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose
The honours of his matchless horse his own.
But many a crime, deem'd innocent on Earth,
Is register'd in Heav'n ; and these no doubt

Have each their record, with a curse annex'd. ·
Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,
But God will never. When he charg'd the Jew
T' assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise ;
And when the bush-exploring boy, that seiz'd
The young, to let the parent bird go free ;
Prov'd he not plainly, that his meaner works
Are yet his care, and have an int'rest all,
All, in the universal Father's love ?
On Noah, and in him on all mankind,
The charter was conferr'd, by which we hold
The flesh of animals in fee, and claim
O'er all we feed on pow'r of life and death.
But read the instrument, and mark it well :
Th' oppression of a tyrannous control
Can find no warrant there. Feed then, and yield
Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous, through sin,
Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute !

The Governor of all, himself to all
So bountiful, in whose attentive ear
The unfledg'd raven, and the lion's whelp,
Plead not in vain for pity on the pangs
Of hunger unassuag'd, has interpos'd,
Not seldom, his avenging arm, to smite
Th' injurious trampler upon Nature's law,
That claims forbearance even for a brute.
He hates the hardness of a Balaam's heart ;
And, prophet as he was, he might not strike
The blameless animal, without rebuke,
On which he rode. Her opportune offence
Sav'd him, or th' unrelenting seer had died.
He sees that human equity is slack

To interfere, though in so just a cause :
And makes the task his own. Inspiring dumb
And helpless victims with a sense so keen
Of inj'ry, with such knowledge of their strength,
And such sagacity to take revenge,
That oft the beast has seem'd to judge the man.
An ancient, not a legendary tale,
By one of sound intelligence rehears'd,
(If such who plead for Providence may seem
In modern eyes,) shall make the doctrine clear.

Where England, stretch'd towards the setting Sun,
Narrow and long, o'erlooks the western wave,
Dwelt young Misagathus ; a scorner he
Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,
Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce.
He journey'd ; and his chance was as he went
To join a trav'ller, of far different note,
Evander, fam'd for piety, for years
Deserving honour, but for wisdom more.
Fame had not left the venerable man
A stranger to the manners of the youth,
Whose face, too, was familiar to his view.
Their way was on the margin of the land,
O'er the green summit of the rocks, whose base
Beats back the roaring surge, scarce heard so high.
The charity, that warm'd his heart, was mov'd
At sight of the man-monster. With a smile
Gentle, and affable, and full of grace,
As fearful of offending whom he wish'd
Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths
Not harshly thunder'd forth, or rudely press'd,
But, like his purpose, gracious, kind, and sweet.

“ And dost thou dream, th’ impenetrable man
Exclaim’d, “ that me the lullabies of age,
And fantasies of dotards such as thou,
Can cheat, or move a moment’s fear in me?
Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave
Need no such aids, as superstition lends,
To steel their hearts against the dread of death.”
He spoke, and to the precipice at hand
Push’d with a madman’s fury. Fancy shrinks,
And the blood thrills and curdles, at the thought
Of such a gulf as he design’d his grave.
But, though the felon on his back could dare
The dreadful leap, more rational, his steed
Declin’d the death, and wheeling swiftly round,
Or e’er his hoof had press’d the crumbling verge,
Baffled his rider, sav’d against his will.
The phrenzy of the brain may be redress’d
By med’cine well applied, but without grace
The heart’s insanity admits no cure.
Enrag’d the more, by what might have reform’d
His horrible intent, again he sought
Destruction, with a zeal to be destroy’d,
With sounding whip, and rowels dyed in blood.
But still in vain. The Providence, that meant
A longer date to the far nobler beast,
Spar’d yet again th’ ignoble for his sake.
And now, his prowess prov’d, and his sincere
Incurable obduracy evinc’d, [earn’d
His rage grew cool; and pleas’d, perhaps, t’ have
So cheaply the renown of that attempt,
With looks of some complacence he resum’d
His road, deriding much the blank amaze

Of good Evander, still where he was left,
Fix'd motionless, and petrified with dread.
So on they far'd. Discourse on other themes
Ensuing seem'd t' obliterate the past ;
And tamer far for so much fury shown,
(As is the course of rash and fiery men,)
The rude companion smil'd, as if transform'd.
But 't was a transient calm. A storm was near,
An unsuspected storm. His hour was come,
The impious challenger of Pow'r divine [wrath,
Was now to learn, that Heav'n, though slow to
Is never with impunity defied.
His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,
Snorting, and starting into sudden rage,
Unbidden, and not now to be controll'd,
Rush'd to the cliff, and, having reach'd it, stood.
At once the shock unseated him : he flew
Sheer'd o'er the craggy barrier ; and immers'd
Deep in the flood, found, when he sought it not,
The death he had deserv'd, and died alone.
So God wrought double justice ; made the fool
The victim of his own tremendous choice,
And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.

I would not enter on my list of friends [sense,
(Though grac'd with polish'd manners and fine
Yet wanting sensibility) the man,
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail,
That crawls at ev'ning in the public path ;
But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,
Will tread aside and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,

And charg'd, perhaps, with venom, that intrudes,
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes
Sacred to neatness and repose, th' alcove,
The chamber, or refectory, may die :
A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bounds,
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
Or take their pastime in the spacious field :
There they are privileg'd ; and he that hunts
Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs the economy of Nature's realm,
Who, when she form'd, design'd them an abode.
The sum is this. If man's convenience, health
Or safety, interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.
Else they are all — the meanest things that are,
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,
As God was free to form them at the first,
Who in his sov'reign wisdom made them all.
Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons
To love it too. The spring-time of our years
Is soon dishonour'd and defil'd in most
By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
To check them. But, alas ! none sooner shoots,
If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth,
Than cruelty, most dev'lish of them all.
Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule
And righteous limitation of it's act,
By which Heav'n moves in pard'ning guilty man ;
And he that shows none, being ripe in years,
And conscious of the outrage he commits,
Shall seek it, and not find it, in his turn.

Distinguish'd much by reason, and still more
By our capacity of Grace divine,
From creatures, that exist but for our sake,
Which, having serv'd us, perish, we are held
Accountable ; and God some future day
Will reckon with us roundly for th' abuse
Of what he deems no mean or trivial trust.
Superior as we are, they yet depend
Not more on human help than we on theirs.
Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were giv'n
In aid of our defects. In some are found
Such teachable and apprehensive parts,
That man's attainments in his own concerns,
Match'd with th' expertness of the brutes in theirs,
Are oft-times vanquish'd and thrown far behind.
Some show that nice sagacity of smell,
And read with such discernment, in the port
And figure of the man, his secret aim,
That oft we owe our safety to a skill
We could not teach, and must despair to learn.
But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop
To quadruped instructors, many a good
And useful quality, and virtue too,
Rarely exemplified among ourselves.
Attachment, never to be wean'd, or chang'd
By any change of fortune, proof alike
Against unkindness, absence, and neglect ;
Fidelity, that neither bribe nor threat
Can move or warp ; and gratitude for small
And trivial favours, lasting as the life,
And glist'ning even in the dying eye.

Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms

Wins public honour ; and ten thousand sit
Patiently present at a sacred song,
Commemoration mad ; content to hear
(O wonderful effect of music's power !)
Messiah's eulogy for Handel's sake.
But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve —
(For was it less ? what heathen would have dar'd
To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath,
And hang it up in honour of a man ?)
Much less might serve, when all that we design
Is but to gratify an itching ear,
And give the day to a musician's praise.
Remember Handel ! Who, that was not born
Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
Or can, the more than Homer of his age ?
Yes — we remember him ; and while we praise
A talent so divine, remember too
That His most holy book, from whence it came,
Was never meant, was never us'd before,
To buckram out the mem'ry of a man.
But hush ! the Muse perhaps is too severe ;
And with a gravity beyond the size
And measure of th' offence, rebukes a deed
Less impious than absurd, and owing more
To want of judgment than to wrong design.
So in the chapel of old Ely House,
When wand'ring Charles, who meant to be the third,
Had fled from William, and the news was fresh,
The simple clerk, but loyal, did announce,
And eke did rear right merrily, two staves,
Sung to the praise and glory of King George !
—Man praises man ; and Garrick's mem'r'y next,

When time hath somewhat mellow'd it, and made
The idol of our worship while he liv'd
The God of our idolatry once more,
Shall have it's altar ; and the World shall go
In pilgrimage to bow before his shrine.
The theatre, too small, shall suffocate
It's squeez'd contents, and more than it admits
Shall sigh at their exclusion, and return
Ungratified : for there some noble lord
Shall stuff his shoulders with King Richard's bunch,
Or wrap himself in Hamlet's inky cloak,
And strut, and storm, and straddle, stamp and stare,
To show the world how Garrick did not act. .
For Garrick was a worshipper himself ;
He drew the liturgy, and fram'd the rites
And solemn ceremonial of the day,
And call'd the world to worship on the banks
Of Avon, fam'd in song. Ah, pleasant proof
That piety has still in human hearts
Some place, a spark or two not yet extinct.
The mulb'rry-tree was hung with blooming wreaths ;
The mulb'rry-tree stood centre of the dance ;
The mulb'rry-tree was hymn'd with dulcet airs ;
And from his touchwood trunk the mulb'rry-tree
Supplied such relics as devotion holds
Still sacred, and preserves with pious care.
So 't was a hallow'd time : decorum reign'd,
And mirth without offence. No few return'd,
Doubtless much edified, and all refresh'd.
—Man praises man. The rabble all alive
From tippling benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,
Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,

A pompous and slow-moving pageant, comes,
Some shout him, and some hang upon his car,
To gaze in 's eyes, and bless him. Maidens wave
Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy :
While others, not so satisfied, unhorse
The gilded equipage, and turning loose
His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve. [state ?
Why? what has charm'd them? Hath he sav'd the
No. Doth he purpose it's salvation? No.
Enchanting novelty, that moon at full,
That finds out ev'ry crevice of the head,
That is not sound and perfect, hath in theirs
Wrought this disturbance. But the wane is near,
And his own cattle must suffice him soon.
Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,
And dedicate a tribute, in it's use
And just direction sacred, to a thing
Doom'd to the dust, or lodg'd already there.
Encomium in old time was poet's work ;
But poets, having lavishly long since
Exhausted all materials of the art,
The task now falls into the public hand ;
And I, contented with an humble theme,
Have pour'd my stream of panegyric down
The vale of Nature, where it creeps, and winds
Among her lovely works with a secure
And unambitious course, reflecting clear,
If not the virtues, yet the worth, of brutes.
And I am recompens'd, and deem the toils
Of poetry not lost, if verse of mine
May stand between an animal and woe,
And teach one tyrant pity for his drudge.

The groans of Nature in this nether world,
Which Heav'n has heard for ages, have an end.
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,
The time of rest, the promis'd sabbath, comes.
Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
Over a sinful world ; and what remains
Of this tempestuous state of human things
Is merely as the working of a sea
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest :
For He, whose car the winds are, and the clouds
The dust, that waits upon his sultry march,
When sin hath mov'd him, and his wrath is hot,
Shall visit Earth in mercy ; shall descend
Propitious in his chariot pav'd with love ;
And what his storms have blasted and defac'd
For man's revolt shall with a smile repair.

Sweet is the harp of prophecy ; too sweet
Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch :
Nor can the wonders it records be sung
To meaner music, and not suffer loss.
But when a poet, or when one like me,
Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs,
Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
Such is the impulse and the spur he feels,
To give it praise proportion'd to it's worth,
That not t' attempt it, arduous as he deems
The labour, were a task more arduous still.

O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss ! which who can see,

Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy ?
Rivers of gladness water all the Earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty : the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance ; and the land, once lean,
Or fertile only in it's own disgrace,
Exults to see it's thistly curse repeal'd.
The various seasons woven into one,
And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion, and the libbard, and the bear,
Graze with the fearless flocks ; all bask at noon,
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now : the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
All creatures worship man, and all mankind
One Lord, one Father. Errour has no place :
That creeping pestilence is driv'n away :
The breath of Heav'n has chas'd it. In the heart
No passion touches a discordant string,
But all is harmony and love. Disease
Is not : the pure and uncontaminate blood
Holds it's due course, nor fears the frost of age.
One song employs all nations ; and all cry,
“ Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us !”

The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy ;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous Hosanna round.
Behold the measure of the promise fill'd ;
See Salem built, the labour of a God !
Bright as a sun the sacred city shines ;
All kingdoms and all princes of the Earth
Flock to that light ; the glory of all lands
Flows into her ; unbounded is her joy,
And endless her increase. Thy rams are there,
Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar * :
The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
And Saba's spicy groves, pay tribute there.
Praise is in all her gates : upon her walls,
And in her streets, and in her spacious courts,
Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there
Kneels with the native of the farthest west ;
And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand,
And worships. Her report has travell'd forth
Into all lands. From ev'ry clime they come
To see thy beauty, and to share thy joy,
O Sion ! an assembly such as Earth
Saw never, such as Heav'n stoops down to see. [once
Thus Heav'nward all things tend. For all were
Perfect, and all must be at length restor'd.
So God has greatly purpos'd ; who would else

* Nebaioth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael, and progenitors of the Arabs, in the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large.

In his dishonour'd works himself endure
Dishonour, and be wrong'd without redress.
Haste then, and wheel away a shatter'd world,
Ye slow-revolving seasons ! we would see
(A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)
A world, that does not dread and hate his laws,
And suffer for it's crime ; would learn how fair
The creature is, that God pronounces good,
How pleasant in itself what pleases him.
Here ev'ry drop of honey hides a sting ;
Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flow'rs ;
And ev'n the joy, that haply some poor heart
Derives from Heav'n, pure as the fountain is,
Is sullied in the stream, taking a taint
From touch of human lips, at best impure.
O for a world in principle as chaste
As this is gross and selfish ! over which
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,
That govern all things here, should'ring aside
The meek and modest Truth, and forcing her
To seek a refuge from the tongue of Strife
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men ;
Where Violence shall never lift the sword,
Nor Cunning justify the proud man's wrong,
Leaving the poor no remedy but tears :
Where he, that fills an office, shall esteem
Th' occasion it presents of doing good
More than the perquisite : where Law shall speak
Seldom, and never but as Wisdom prompts
And Equity ; not jealous more to guard
A worthless form, than to decide aright.
Where Fashion shall not sanctify abuse,

Nor smooth Good-breeding (supplemental grace)
With lean performance ape the work of Love !

Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the Earth,
Thou who alone art worthy ! It was thine
By ancient covenant, ere Nature's birth ;
And thou hast made it thine by purchase since,
And overpaid it's value with thy blood.
Thy saints proclaim thee King ; and in their hearts
Thy title is engraven with a pen
Dipp'd in the fountain of eternal love.
Thy saints proclaim thee King ; and thy delay
Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see
The dawn of thy last advent, long desir'd,
Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
And flee for safety to the falling rocks.
The very spirit of the world is tir'd
Of it's own taunting question, ask'd so long,
“ Where is the promise of your Lord's approach ? ”
The infidel has shot his bolts away,
Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,
He gleans the blunted shafts, that have recoil'd,
And aims them at the shield of Truth again.
The veil is rent, rent, too, by priestly hands,
That hides divinity from mortal eyes ;
And all the mysteries to faith propos'd,
Insulted and traduc'd, are cast aside,
As useless, to the moles and to the bats.
They now are deem'd the faithful, and are prais'd,
Who, constant only in rejecting thee,
Deny thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
And quit their office for their error's sake.

Blind, and in love with darkness ! yet ev'n these
Worthy, compar'd with sycophants, who knee
Thy name adoring, and then preach thee man !
So fares thy church. But how thy church may fare,
The world takes little thought. Who will may
preach,

And what they will. All pastors are alike
To wand'ring sheep, resolv'd to follow none.
Two gods divide them all — Pleasure and Gain :
For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
And in their service wage perpetual war
With Conscience and with thee. Lust in their hearts,
And mischief in their hands, they roam the Earth,
To prey upon each other : stubborn, fierce,
High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.
Thy prophets speak of such ; and, noting down
The features of the last degen'rate times,
Exhibit ev'ry lineament of these.

Come then, and added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
Due to thy last and most effectual work,
Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of a world !

He is the happy man, whose life e'en now
Shows somewhat of that happier life to come ;
Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,
Is pleas'd with it, and, were he free to choose,
Would make his fate his choice ; whom peace, the
fruit

Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,
Prepare for happiness ; bespeak him one
Content indeed to sojourn while he must
Below the skies, but having there his home.

The World o'erlooks him in her busy search
Of objects, more illustrious in her view ;
And, occupied as earnestly as she,
Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the World.
She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not ;
He seeks not hers, for he has prov'd them vain ;
He cannot skim the ground like summer birds
Pursuing gilded flies ; and such he deems
Her honours, her emoluments, her joys.
Therefore in contemplation is his bliss, [Earth
Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from
She makes familiar with a Heav'n unseen,
And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.
Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,
And censur'd oft as useless. Stillest streams
Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
That flutters least, is longest on the wing.
Ask him, indeed, what trophies he has rais'd,
Or what achievements of immortal fame
He purposes, and he shall answer — None.
His warfare is within. There, unfatigu'd,
His fervent spirit labours. There he fights,
And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
And never-with'ring wreaths, compar'd with which
The laurels that a Cæsar reaps are weeds.
Perhaps the self-approving haughty World,
That as she sweeps him with her whistling silks
Scarce deigns to notice him, or, if she see,
Deems him a cipher in the works of God,
Receives advantage from his noiseless hours,
Of what she little dreams. Perhaps she owes
Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring

And plenteous harvest, to the pray'r he makes,
When, Isaac-like, the solitary saint
Walks forth to meditate at even-tide,
And think on her, who thinks not for herself.
Forgive him then, thou bustler in concerns
Of little worth, an idler in the best,
If, author of no mischief and some good,
He seek his proper happiness by means,
That may advance, but cannot hinder, thine.
Nor, though he tread the secret path of life,
Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,
Account him an encumbrance on the state,
Receiving benefits, and rend'ring none.
His sphere though humble, if that humble sphere
Shine with his fair example, and though small
His influence, if that influence all be spent
In soothing sorrow, and in quenching strife,
In aiding helpless indigence, in works,
From which at least a grateful few derive
Some taste of comfort in a world of woe;
Then let the supercilious great confess
He serves his country, recompenses well
The state, beneath the shadow of whose vine
He sits secure, and in the scale of life
Holds no ignoble, though a slighted, place.
The man, whose virtues are more felt than seen,
Must drop indeed the hope of public praise;
But, he may boast, what few that win it can,
That, if his country stand not by his skill,
At least his follies have not wrought her fall.
Polite Refinement offers him in vain
Her golden tube, through which a sensual World

Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,
The neat conveyance hiding all the offence.
Not that he peevishly rejects a mode,
Because that World adopts it. If it bear
The stamp and clear impression of good sense,
And be not costly more than of true worth,
He puts it on, and for decorum sake
Can wear it e'en as gracefully as she.
She judges of refinement by the eye,
He, by the test of conscience, and a heart
Not soon deceiv'd ; aware, that what is base
No polish can make sterling ; and that vice,
Though well perfum'd and elegantly dress'd,
Like an unburied carcase trick'd with flow'rs,
Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far
For cleanly riddance, than for fair attire.
So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,
More golden than that age of fabled gold
Renown'd in ancient song ; not vex'd with care
Or stain'd with guilt, beneficent, approv'd
Of God and man, and peaceful in it's end.
So glide my life away ! and so at last,
My share of duties decently fulfill'd,
May some disease, not tardy to perform
It's destin'd office, yet with gentle stroke,
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat,
Beneath the turf, that I have often trod.
It shall not grieve me then, that once when call'd
To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,
I play'd awhile, obedient to the fair,
With that light task ; but soon, to please her more,
Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please,

Let fall th' unfinish'd wreath, and rov'd for fruit ;
 Rov'd far, and gather'd much : some harsh, 't is true,
 Pick'd from the thorns and briers of reproof,
 But wholesome, well-disgested ; grateful some
 To palates, that can taste immortal truth ;
 Insipid else, and sure to be despis'd.
 But all is in his hand, whose praise I seek.
 In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,
 If he regard not, though divine the theme.
 'T is not in artful measures, in the chime
 And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre,
 To charm his ear, whose eye is on the heart ;
 Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
 Whose approbation — prosper ev'n mine.

TIROCINIUM :

OR,

A REVIEW OF SCHOOLS.

Κεφαλαιον δη παιδειας ορθη τροφη.—Plato.

Αρχη πολιτειας απασης νιων τροφα.—Diog. Laert.

It is not from his form, in which we trace
 Strength join'd with beauty, dignity with grace,
 That man, the master of this globe, derives
 His right of empire over all that lives.
 That form, indeed, th' associate of a mind
 Vast in it's powers, ethereal in it's kind,
 That form, the labour of Almighty skill,
 Fram'd for the service of a free-born will,

Asserts precedence, and bespeaks control,
But borrows all it's grandeur from the soul.
Hers is the state, the splendour, and the throne
An intellectual kingdom, all her own.
For her the Mem'ry fills her ample page
With truths pour'd down from ev'ry distant age ;
For her amasses an unbounded store,
The wisdom of great nations, now no more ;
Though laden, not encumber'd with her spoil ;
Laborious, yet unconscious of her toil ;
When copiously supplied, then most enlarg'd ;
Still to be fed, and not to be surcharg'd.
For her the Fancy, roving unconfin'd,
The present muse of ev'ry pensive mind,
Works magic wonders, adds a brighter hue
To Nature's scenes than Nature ever knew.
At her command winds rise, and waters roar,
Again she lays them slumb'ring on the shore ;
With flow'r and fruit the wilderness supplies,
Or bids the rocks in ruder pomp arise.
For her the Judgment, umpire in the strife,
That Grace and Nature have to wage through life,
Quick-sighted arbiter of good and ill,
Appointed sage preceptor to the Will,
Condemns, approves, and with a faithful voice
Guides the decision of a doubtful choice.

Why did the fiat of a God give birth
To yon fair Sun, and his attendant Earth ?
And, when descending he resigns the skies,
Why takes the gentler Moon her turn to rise,
Whom Ocean feels through all his countless waves,
And owns her pow'r on ev'ry shore he laves ?

Why do the seasons still enrich the year,
Fruitful and young as in their first career?
Spring hangs her infant blossoms on the trees,
Rock'd in the cradle of the western breeze;
Summer in haste the thriving charge receives
Beneath the shade of her expanded leaves,
Till Autumn's fiercer heats and plenteous dews
Dye them at last in all their glowing hues. —
'T were wild profusion all, and bootless waste,
Pow'r misemploy'd, munificence misplac'd,
Had not it's author dignified the plan,
And crown'd it with the majesty of man.
Thus form'd, thus plac'd, intelligent, and taught,
Look where he will, the wonders God has wrought,
The wildest scorner of his Maker's laws
Finds in a sober moment time to pause,
To press th' important question on his heart,
“ Why form'd at all, and wherefore as thou art ? ”
If man be what he seems, this hour a slave,
The next mere dust and ashes in the grave ;
Endu'd with reason only to descry
His crimes and follies with an aching eye ;
With passions, just that he may prove, with pain,
The force he spends against their fury vain ;
And if, soon after having burnt, by turns,
With ev'ry lust, with which frail Nature burns,
His being end, where death dissolves the bond,
The tomb take all, and all be blank beyond ;
Then he, of all that Nature has brought forth,
Stands self-impeach'd the creature of least worth,
And useless while he lives and when he dies,
Brings into doubt the wisdom of the skies.

Truths, that the learn'd pursue with eager thought,
Are not important always as dear bought,
Proving at last, though told in pompous strains,
A childish waste of philosophic pains ;
But truths, on which depends our main concern,
That 't is our shame and mis'ry not to learn,
Shine by the side of ev'ry path we tread
With such a lustre, he that runs may read.
'T is true that, if to trifle life away
Down to the sunset of their latest day,
Then perish on futurity's wide shore
Like fleeting exhalations, found no more,
Were all that Heav'n requir'd of human-kind,
And all the plan their destiny design'd,
What none could rev'rence all might justly blame,
And man would breathe but for his Maker's
shame.

But reason heard, and nature well perus'd,
At once the dreaming mind is disabus'd.
If all we find possessing earth, sea, air,
Reflect his attributes, who plac'd them there,
Fulfil the purpose, and appear design'd
Proofs of the wisdom of th' all-seeing mind,
'T is plain the creature, whom he chose t' invest
With kingship and dominion o'er the rest,
Receiv'd his nobler nature, and was made
Fit for the power, in which he stands array'd ;
That first, or last, hereafter, if not here,
He, too, might make his author's wisdom clear,
Praise him on Earth, or, obstinately dumb,
Suffer his justice in a world to come.
This once believ'd, 't were logic misapplied,
To prove a consequence by none denied,

That we are bound to cast the minds of youth
Betimes into the mould of heav'nly truth,
That taught of God they may indeed be wise,
Nor, ignorantly wand'ring, miss the skies.

In early days the conscience has in most
A quickness, which in later life is lost :
Preserv'd from guilt by salutary fears,
Or, guilty, soon relenting into tears.
Too careless often, as our years proceed,
What friends we sort with, or what books we read,
Our parents yet exert a prudent care,
To feed our infant minds with proper fare ;
And wisely store the nurs'ry by degrees
With wholesome learning, yet acquir'd with ease.
Neatly secur'd from being soil'd or torn
Beneath a pane of thin translucent horn,
A book (to please us at a tender age
'T is call'd a book, though but a single page)
Presents the pray'r the Saviour deign'd to teach,
Which children use, and parsons — when they
preach.

Lisping our syllables, we scramble next
Through moral narrative, or sacred text ;
And learn with wonder how this world began,
Who made, who marr'd, and who has ransom'd,
man.

Points, which, unless the Scripture made them plain,
The wisest heads might agitate in vain.
O thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleas'd remember, and, while Mem'ry yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget ;

Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail; [style,
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well employ'd, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despis'd a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet ev'n in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man, whose PILGRIM marks the road,
And guides the PROGRESS of the soul to God.
'T were well with most, if books, that could engage
Their childhood, pleas'd them at a riper age;
The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,
Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy;
And not with curses on his heart, who stole
The gem of truth from his unguarded soul.
The stamp of artless piety impress'd
By kind tuition on his yielding breast,
The youth now bearded, and yet pert and raw,
Regards with scorn, though once receiv'd with awe;
And, warp'd into the labyrinth of lies,
That babblers, call'd philosophers, devise,
Blasphemes his creed, as founded on a plan
Replete with dreams, unworthy of a man.
Touch but his nature in it's ailing part,
Assert the native evil of his heart,
His pride resents the charge, although the proof
Rise in his forehead, and seem rank enough:
Point to the cure, describe a Saviour's cross
As God's expedient to retrieve his loss,

The young apostate sickens at the view,
And hates it with the malice of a Jew.

How weak the barrier of mere Nature proves,
Oppos'd against the pleasures Nature loves !
While self-betray'd, and wilfully undone,
She longs to yield, no sooner woo'd than won.
Try now the merits of this blest exchange
Of modest truth for wit's eccentric range.
Time was, he clos'd as he began the day,
With decent duty, not asham'd to pray :
The practice was a bond upon his heart,
A pledge he gave for a consistent part ;
Nor could he dare presumptuously displease
A pow'r, confess'd so lately on his knees.
But now, farewell all legendary tales,
The shadows fly, philosophy prevails ;
Pray'r to the winds, and caution to the waves ;
Religion makes the free by nature slaves.
Priests have invented, and the World admir'd
What knavish priests promulgate as inspir'd ;
Till Reason, now no longer overaw'd,
Resumes her pow'rs, and spurns the clumsy fraud ;
And, common-sense diffusing real day,
The meteor of the Gospel dies away.
Such rhapsodies our shrewd discerning youth
Learn from expert inquirers after truth ;
Whose only care, might Truth presume to speak,
Is not to find what they profess to seek.
And thus, well-tutor'd only while we share
A mother's lectures and a nurse's care ;
And taught at schools much mythologic stuff,
But sound religion sparingly enough ;

Our early notices of truth, disgrac'd,
Soon lose their credit, and are all effac'd.

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,
Lascivious, headstrong, or all these at once ;
That in good time the stripling's finish'd taste
For loose expense, and fashionable waste,
Should prove your ruin, and his own at last ;
Train him in public with a mob of boys,
Childish in mischief only and in noise,
Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten
In infidelity and lewdness men.

There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,
That authors are most useful pawn'd or sold ;
That pedantry is all that schools impart,
But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart ;
There waiter Dick, with Bacchanalian lays,
Shall win his heart, and have his drunken praise,
His counsellor and bosom-friend, shall prove,
And some street-pacing harlot his first love.
Schools, unless discipline were doubly strong,
Detain their adolescent charge too long ;
The management of tiroes of eighteen
Is difficult, their punishment obscene.
The stout tall captain, whose superior size
The minor heroes view with envious eyes,
Becomes their pattern, upon whom they fix
Their whole attention, and ape all his tricks.
His pride, that scorns t' obey or to submit,
With them is courage ; his effront'ry wit.
His wild excursions, window-breaking feats,
Robb'ry of gardens, quarrels in the streets,

His hair-breadth 'scapes, and all his daring schemes,
Transport them, and are made their fav'rite themes.
In little bosoms such achievements strike
A kindred spark : they burn to do the like.
Thus, half-accomplish'd ere he yet begin
To show the peeping down upon his chin ;
And, as maturity of years comes on,
Made just th' adept that you design'd your son ;
T' ensure the perseverance of his course,
And give your monstrous project all it's force,
Send him to college. If he there be tam'd,
Or in one article of vice reclaim'd,
Where no regard of ord'nances is shown
Or look'd for now, the fault must be his own.
Some sneaking virtue lurks in him, no doubt,
Where neither strumpets' charms, nor drinking-
bout,

Nor gambling practices, can find it out.
Such youths of spirit, and that spirit too,
Ye nurs'ries of our boys, we owe to you :
Though from ourselves the mischief more proceeds,
For public schools 't is public folly feeds.
The slaves of custom and establish'd mode,
With packhorse constancy we keep the road,
Crooked or straight, through quags or thorny dells,
True to the jingling of our leader's bells.
To follow foolish precedents, and wink
With both our eyes, is easier than to think :
And such an age as ours balks no expense,
Except of caution, and of common sense ;
Else, sure, notorious fact, and proof so plain,
Would turn our steps into a wiser train

I blame not those, who, with what care they can,
O'erwatch the num'rous and unruly clan ;
Or, if I blame, 't is only that they dare
Promise a work, of which they must despair.
Have ye, ye sage intendants of the whole,
A ubiquarian presence and control,
Elisha's eye, that, when Gehazi stray'd,
Went with him, and saw all the game he play'd ?
Yes — ye are conscious ; and on all the shelves
Your pupils strike upon, have struck yourselves.
Or if, by nature sober, ye had then,
Boys as ye were, the gravity of men ;
Ye knew at least, by constant proofs address'd
To ears and eyes, the vices of the rest.
But ye connive at what ye cannot cure,
And evils, not to be endur'd, endure,
Lest pow'r exerted, but without success,
Should make the little ye retain still less.
Ye once were justly fam'd for bringing forth
Undoubted scholarship and genuine worth ;
And in the firmament of fame still shines
A glory, bright as that of all the signs,
Of poets rais'd by you, and statesmen, and divines.
Peace to them all ! those brilliant times are fled,
And no such lights are kindling in their stead ;
Our striplings shine indeed, but with such rays,
As set the midnight riot in a blaze ;
And seem, if judg'd by their expressive looks,
Deeper in none than in their surgeons' books.
Say, Muse, (for education made the song,
No Muse can hesitate, or linger long,)

What causes move us, knowing as we must,
That these *menageries* all fail their trust,
To send our sons to scout and scamper there,
While colts and puppies cost us so much care?

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
We love the play-place of our early days;
The scene is touching, and the heart is stone,
That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.
The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
The very name we carv'd subsisting still;
The bench on which we sat while deep employ'd,
Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, not yet de-
stroy'd;

The little ones, unbutton'd, glowing hot,
Playing our games, and on the very spot;
As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dext'rous pat;
The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollection of our own delights,
That, viewing it, we seem almost t' obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again.
This fond attachment to the well-known place,
Whence first we started into life's long race,
Maintains it's hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it ev'n in age, and at our latest day.
Hark! how the sire of chits, whose future share
Of classic food begins to be his care,
With his own likeness plac'd on either knee,
Indulges all a father's heart-felt glee;
And tells them, as he strokes their silver locks,
That they must soon learn Latin, and to box;

Then turning he regales his list'ning wife
With all th' adventures of his early life :
His skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise,
In bilking tavern-bills, and spouting plays ;
What shifts he us'd, detected in a scrape,
How he was flogg'd, or had the luck t' escape ;
What sums he lost at play, and how he sold
Watch, seals, and all — till all his pranks are told.
Retracing thus his *frolics*, ('t is a name
That palliates deeds of folly and of shame,)
He gives the local bias all it's sway ;
Resolves that, where he play'd, his sons shall play,
And destines their bright genius to be shown
Just in the scene, where he display'd his own.
The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught,
To be as bold and forward as he ought ;
The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.
Ah happy designation, prudent choice,
Th' event is sure ; expect it, and rejoice !
Soon see your wish fulfill'd in either child,
The pert made perter, and the tame made wild.

The great, indeed, by titles, riches, birth,
Excus'd th' incumbrance of more solid worth,
Are best dispos'd of where, with most success
They may acquire that confident address,
Those habits of profuse and lewd expence,
That scorn of all delights but those of sense,
Which, though in plain plebeians we condemn,
With so much reason all expect from them.
But families of less illustrious fame,
Whose chief distinction is their spotless name,

Whose heirs, their honours none, their income small,
Must shine by true desert, or not at all,
What dream they of, that with so little care
They risk their hopes, their dearest treasure, there?
They dream of little Charles or William grac'd
With wig prolix, down flowing to his waist;
They see th' attentive crowds his talents draw,
They hear him speak — the oracle of law.
The father, who designs his babe a priest,
Dreams him episcopally such at least;
And, while the playful jockey scours the room
Briskly, astride upon the parlour broom,
In fancy sees him more superbly ride
In coach with purple lin'd, and mitres on it's side.
Events improbable and strange as these,
Which only a parental eye foresees,
A public school shall bring to pass with ease.
But how! resides such virtue in that air,
As must create an appetite for pray'r?
And will it breathe into him all the zeal,
That candidates for such a prize should feel,
To take the lead and be the foremost still
In all true worth and literary skill?
“ Ah blind to bright futurity, untaught
The knowledge of the world, and dull of thought!
Church-ladders are not always mounted best
By learned clerks, and latinists profess'd,
The exalted prize demands an upward look,
Not to be found by poring on a book,
Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
Is more than adequate to all I seek.

Let erudition grace him, or not grace,
I give the bauble but the second place ;
His wealth, fame, honours, all that I intend,
Subsist and centre in one point — a friend,
A friend, whate'er he studies or neglects,
Shall give him consequence, heal all defects.
His intercourse with peers and sons of peers —
There dawns the splendour of his future years :
In that bright quarter his propitious skies
Shall blush betimes, and there his glory rise. [teach
Your Lordship, and *Your Grace* ! what school can
A rhet'ric equal to those parts of speech ?
What need of Homer's verse, or Tully's prose,
Sweet interjections ! if he learn but those ?
Let rev'rend churls his ignorance rebuke,
Who starve upon a dog's-ear'd Pentateuch,
The parson knows enough, who knows a duke."
Egregious purpose ! worthily begun
In barb'rous prostitution of your son ;
Press'd on *his* part by means, that would disgrace
A scriv'ner's clerk, or footman out of place,
And ending, if at last it's end be gain'd,
In sacrilege, in God's own house profan'd.
It may succeed ; and, if his sins should call
For more than common punishment, it shall ;
The wretch shall rise, and be the thing on Earth
Least qualified in honour, learning, worth,
To occupy a sacred, awful post,
In which the best and worthiest tremble most.
The *royal letters* are a thing of course,
A king, that would, might recommend his horse ;

And deans, no doubt, and chapters, with one voice,
As bound in duty, would confirm the choice.
Behold your bishop ! well he plays his part,
Christian in name, and infidel in heart,
Ghostly in office, earthly in his plan,
A slave at court, elsewhere a lady's man.
Dumb as a senator, and as a priest
A piece of mere church-furniture at best ;
To live estrang'd from God his total scope,
And his end sure, without one glimpse of hope.
But fair although and feasible it seem,
Depend not much upon your golden dream ;
For Providence, that seems concern'd t' exempt
The hallow'd bench from absolute contempt,
In spite of all the wrigglers into place,
Still keeps a seat or two for worth and grace ;
And therefore 't is, that, though the sight be rare,
We sometimes see a Lowth or Bagot there.
Besides, school-friendships are not always found,
Though fair in promise, permanent and sound ;
The most disint'rested and virtuous minds,
In early years connected, time unbinds ;
New situations give a diff'rent cast
Of habit, inclination, temper, taste ;
And he, that seem'd our counterpart at first,
Soon shows the strong similitude revers'd.
Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.
Boys are at best but pretty buds unblown,
Whose scent and hues are rather guess'd than known ;
Each dreams that each is just what he appears,
But learns his errour in maturer years,

When disposition, like a sail unfurl'd,
Shows all it's rents and patches to the world.
If, therefore, ev'n when honest in design,
A boyish friendship may so soon decline,
'T were wiser, sure, t' inspire a little heart
With just abhorrence of so mean a part,
Than set your son to work at a vile trade,
For wages so unlikely to be paid.

Our public hives of puerile resort,
That are of chief and most approv'd report,
To such base hopes, in many a sordid soul,
Owe their repute in part, but not the whole.
A principle, whose proud pretensions pass
Unquestion'd, though the jewel be but glass —
That with a world, not often over-nice,
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice ;
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,
Of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride —
Contributes most, perhaps, t' enhance their fame ;
And emulation is it's specious name.
Boys, once on fire with that contentious zeal,
Feel all the rage, that female rivals feel ;
The prize of beauty in a woman's eyes
Not brighter than in theirs, the scholar's prize.
The spirit of that competition burns
With all varieties of ill by turns ;
Each vainly magnifies his own success,
Resents his fellow's, wishes it were less,
Exults in his miscarriage, if he fail,
Deems his reward too great, if he prevail,
And labours to surpass him day and night,
Less for improvement than to tickle spite.

'The spur is pow'rful, and I grant it's force ;
It pricks the genius forward in it's course,
Allows short time for play, and none for sloth ;
And, felt alike by each, advances both :
But judge, where so much evil intervenes,
The 'end, though plausible, not worth the means.
Weigh, for a moment, classical desert
Against a heart deprav'd and temper hurt ;
Hurt too, perhaps, for life ; for early wrong,
Done to the nobler part, affects it long ;
And you are staunch, indeed, in learning's cause,
If you can crown a discipline, that draws
Such mischiefs after it, with much applause.

Connection form'd for int'rest, and endear'd
By selfish views, thus censur'd and cashier'd ;
And emulation, as engend'ring hate,
Doom'd to a no less ignominious fate :
The props of such proud seminaries fall,
The Jachin and the Boaz of them all.
Great schools rejected then, as those that swell
Beyond a size that can be manag'd well,
Shall royal institutions miss the bays,
And small academies win all the praise ?
Force not my drift beyond it's just intent,
I praise a school as Pope a government ;
So take my judgment in his language dress'd,
" Whate'er is best administer'd is best."
Few boys are born with talents that excel,
But all are capable of living well ;
Then ask not, Whether limited or large ?
But, Watch they strictly, or neglect their charge ?

If anxious only, that their boys may *learn*,
While *morals* languish, a despis'd concern,
The great and small deserve one common blame,
Diff'rent in size, but in effect the same.
Much zeal in virtue's cause all teachers boast,
Though motives of mere lucre sway the most :
Therefore in towns and cities they abound,
For there the game they seek is easiest found ;
Though there, in spite of all that care can do,
Traps to catch youth are most abundant too.
If shrewd, and of a well-constructed brain,
Keen in pursuit, and vig'rous to retain,
Your son come forth a prodigy of skill :
As, wheresoever taught, so form'd, he will ;
The pedagogue, with self-complacent air,
Claims more than half the praise as his due share.
But if, with all his genius, he betray,
Not more intelligent than loose and gay,
Such vicious habits, as disgrace his name,
Threaten his health, his fortune, and his fame ;
Though want of due restraint alone have bred
The symptoms, that you see with so much dread ;
Unenvied there, he may sustain alone
The whole reproach, the fault was all his own.

O 't is a sight to be with joy perus'd,
By all whom sentiment has not abus'd ;
New-fangled sentiment, the boasted grace
Of those, who never feel in the right place ;
A sight surpass'd by none that we can show,
'Though Vestris on one leg still shine below ;
A father blest with an ingenuous son,
Father, and friend, and tutor, all in one.

How ! — turn again to tales long since forgot,
Æsop, and Phædrus, and the rest ? — Why not ?
He will not blush, that has a father's heart,
To take in childish plays a childish part ;
But bends his sturdy back to any toy,
That youth takes pleasure in, to please his boy ;
Then why resign into a stranger's hand
A task as much within your own command,
That God and Nature, and your int'rest too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to you ?
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown
For one, whose tend'rest thoughts all hover round
your own ?

This second weaning, needless as it is,
How does it lac'rate both your heart and his !
Th' indented stick, that loses day by day
Notch after notch, till all are smooth'd away,
Bears witness, long ere his dismissal come,
With what intense desire he wants his home.
But though the joys he hopes beneath your roof
Bid fair enough to answer in the proof,
Harmless, and safe, and nat'ral as they are,
A disappointment waits him even there :
Arriv'd, he feels an unexpected change,
He blushes, hangs his head, is shy and strange,
No longer takes, as once, with fearless ease,
His fav'rite stand between his father's knees,
But seeks the corner of some distant seat,
And eyes the door, and watches a retreat,
And, least familiar where he should be most,
Feels all his happiest privileges lost.
Alas, poor boy ! the natural effect
Of love by absence chill'd into respect.

Say, what accomplishments, at school acquir'd,
Brings he, to sweeten fruits so undesir'd ?
Thou well deserv'st an alienated son,
Unless thy conscious heart acknowledge — none ;
None that, in thy domestic snug recess,
He had not made his own with more address,
Though some perhaps, that shock thy feeling mind,
And better never learn'd, or left behind.
Add too, that, thus estrang'd, thou canst obtain
By no kind arts his confidence again ;
That here begins with most that long complaint
Of filial frankness lost, and love grown faint,
Which, oft neglected, in life's waning years
A parent pours into regardless ears.

Like caterpillars, dangling under trees
By slender threads, and swinging in the breeze,
Which filthily bewray and sore disgrace
The boughs, in which are bred th' unseemly race ;
While ev'ry worm industriously weaves
And winds his web about the rivell'd leaves ;
So num'rous are the follies, that annoy
The mind and heart of ev'ry sprightly boy ;
Imaginations noxious and perverse,
Which admonition can alone disperse.
Th' encroaching nuisance asks a faithful hand,
Patient, affectionate, of high command,
To check the procreation of a breed
Sure to exhaust the plant on which they feed.
'T is not enough that Greek or Roman page,
At stated hours, his freakish thoughts engage ;
Ev'n in his pastimes he requires a friend,
To warn, and teach him safely to unbend ;

O'er all his pleasures gently to preside,
Watch his emotions, and controul their tide ;
And levying thus, and with an easy sway,
A tax of profit from his very play,
T' impress a value, not to be eras'd, [waste.
On moments squander'd else, and running all to
And seems it nothing in a father's eye,
That unimprov'd those many moments fly ?
And is he well content his son should find
No nourishment to feed his growing mind,
But conjugated verbs, and nouns declin'd ?
For such is all the mental food purvey'd
By public hacknies in the schooling trade ;
Who feed a pupil's intellect with store
Of syntax, truly, but with little more ;
Dismiss their cares, when they dismiss their flock,
Machines themselves, and govern'd by a clock.
Perhaps a father, blest with any brains,
Would deem it no abuse, or waste of pains,
T' improve this diet, at no great expense,
With sav'ry truth and wholesome common sense ;
To lead his son, for prospects of delight,
To some not steep, though philosophic, height,
Thence to exhibit to his wond'ring eyes
Yon circling worlds, their distance, and their size,
The moons of Jove, and Saturn's belted ball,
And the harmonious order of them all ;
To show him in an insect or a flow'r
Such microscopic proof of skill and pow'r,
As, hid from ages past, God now displays,
To combat atheists with in modern days ;
To spread the Earth before him, and commend,
With designation of the finger's end,

It's various parts to his attentive note,
Thus bringing home to him the most remote ;
To teach his heart to glow with gen'rous flame,
Caught from the deeds of men of ancient fame :
And, more than all, with commendation due,
To set some living worthy in his view,
Whose fair example may at once inspire
A wish to copy, what he must admire.
Such knowledge gain'd betimes, and which appears,
Though solid, not too weighty for his years,
Sweet in itself, and not forbidding sport,
When health demands it, of athletic sort, [been,
Would make him — what some lovely boys have
And more than one perhaps that I have seen —
An evidence and reprehension both
Of the mere school-boy's lean and tardy growth.

Art thou a man professionally tied,
With all thy faculties elsewhere applied,
Too busy to intend a meaner care,
Than how t' enrich thyself, and next thine heir?
Or art thou (as though rich, perhaps thou art)
But poor in knowledge, having none t' impart? —
Behold that figure, neat, though plainly clad ;
His sprightly mingled with a shade of sad ;
Not of a nimble tongue, though now and then
Heard to articulate like other men :
No jester, and yet lively in discourse,
His phrase well chosen, clear, and full of force ;
And his address, if not quite French in ease,
Not English stiff, but frank, and form'd to please ;
Low in the world, because he scorns it's arts ;
A man of letters, manners, morals, parts ;

Unpatronis'd, and therefore little known ;
Wise for himself and his few friends alone —
In him thy well-appointed proxy see,
Arm'd for a work too difficult for thee ;
Prepar'd by taste, by learning, and true worth,
To form thy son, to strike his genius forth ;
Beneath thy roof, beneath thine eye, to prove
The force of discipline, when back'd by love ;
To double all thy pleasure in thy child,
His mind inform'd, his morals undefil'd.
Safe under such a wing, the boy shall show
No spots contracted among grooms below,
Nor taint his speech with meannesses, design'd
By footman Tom for witty and refin'd.
There, in his commerce with the liv'ried herd,
Lurks the contagion chiefly to be fear'd ;
For since (so fashion dictates) all, who claim
A higher than a mere plebeian fame,
Find it expedient, come what mischief may,
To entertain a thief or two in pay,
(And they that can afford th' expense of more,
Some half-a-dozen and some half-a-score,)
Great cause occurs, to save him from a band
So sure to spoil him, and so near at hand ;
A point secur'd, if once he be supplied
With some such Mentor always at his side.
Are such men rare ? perhaps they would abound,
Were occupation easier to be found,
Were education, else so sure to fail,
Conducted on a manageable scale,
And schools, that have outliv'd all just esteem,
Exchang'd for the secure domestic scheme. —

But, having found him, be thou duke or earl,
Show thou hast sense enough to prize the pearl,
And, as thou wouldst th' advancement of thine heir
In all good faculties beneath his care,
Respect, as is but rational and just,
A man deem'd worthy of so dear a trust.
Despis'd by thee, what more can he expect
From youthful folly than the same neglect?
A flat and fatal negative obtains
That instant upon all his future pains;
His lessons tire, his mild rebukes offend,
And all th' instructions of thy son's best friend
Are a stream chok'd, or trickling to no end.
Doom him not then to solitary meals;
But recollect, that he has sense, and feels;
And that, possessor of a soul refin'd,
An upright heart, and cultivated mind,
His post not mean, his talents not unknown,
He deems it hard to vegetate alone.
And, if admitted at thy board he sit,
Account him no just mark for idle wit;
Offend not him, whom modesty restrains
From repartee, with jokes that he disdains;
Much less transfix his feelings with an oath;
Nor frown, unless he vanish with the cloth. —
And, trust me, his utility may reach
To more than he is hir'd or bound to teach;
Much trash unutter'd, and some ills undone,
Through rev'rence of the censor of thy son.

But, if thy table be indeed unclean,
Foul with excess, and with discourse obscene,
And thou a wretch, whom, foll'wing her old plan,
The World accounts an honourable man,

Because forsooth thy courage has been tried,
And stood the test, perhaps, on the wrong side !
Though thou hadst never grace enough to prove,
That any thing but vice could win thy love ; —
Or hast thou a polite, card-playing wife,
Chain'd to the routs that she frequents for life ;
Who just when industry begins to snore,
Flies, wing'd with joy, to some coach-crowded door ;
And thrice in ev'ry winter throngs thine own
With half the chariots and sedans in town,
Thyself, meanwhile, e'en shifting as thou mayst ;
Not very sober though, nor very chaste :
Or is thine house, though less superb thy rank,
If not a scene of pleasure, a mere blank,
And thou at best, and in thy sob'rest mood,
A trifler vain, and empty of all good ;
Though mercy for thyself thou canst have none,
Hear Nature plead, show mercy to thy son.
Sav'd from his home, where ev'ry day brings forth
Some mischief fatal to his future worth,
Find him a better in a distant spot,
Within some pious pastor's humble cot,
Where vile example (yours I chiefly mean,
The most seducing, and the oft'nest seen)
May never more be stamp'd upon his breast,
Nor yet perhaps incurably impress'd.
Where early rest makes early rising sure,
Disease or comes not, or finds easy cure,
Prevented much by diet neat and plain ;
Or, if it enter, soon starv'd out again :
Where all th' attention of his faithful host,
Discreetly limited to two at most,

May raise such fruits as shall reward his care,
And not at last evaporate in air :
Where, stillness aiding study, and his mind
Serene, and to his duties much inclin'd,
Not occupied in day-dreams, as at home,
Of pleasures past, or follies yet to come,
His virtuous toil may terminate at last
In settled habit and decided taste. —
But whom do I advise ? the fashion-led,
Th' incorrigibly wrong, the deaf and dead,
Whom care and cool deliberation suit
Not better much than spectacles a brute ;
Who, if their sons some slight tuition share,
Deem it of no great moment whose, or where ;
Too proud t' adopt the thoughts of one unknown,
And much too gay t' have any of their own.
“ But courage, man ! ” methought the Muse replied,
“ Mankind are various, and the world is wide :
The ostrich, silliest of the feather'd kind,
And form'd of God without a parent's mind,
Commits her eggs, incautious, to the dust,
Forgetful that the foot may crush the trust ;
And, while on public nurs'ries they rely,
Not knowing, and too oft not caring, why,
Irrational in what they thus prefer,
No few, that would seem wise, resemble her.
But all are not alike. Thy warning voice
May here and there prevent erroneous choice ;
And some perhaps, who, busy as they are,
Yet make their progeny their dearest care, [reach -
(Whose hearts will ache, once told what ills may
Their offspring, left upon so wild a beach,)

Will need no stress of argument t' enforce
Th' expedience of a less advent'rous course :
The rest will slight thy counsel, or condemn ;
But they have human feelings — turn to them."

To you, then, tenants of life's middle state,
Securely plac'd between the small and great,
Whose character, yet undebauch'd, retains
Two-thirds of all the virtue that remains,
Who, wise yourselves, desire your son should learn
Your wisdom and your ways — to you I turn.
Look round you on a world perversely blind ;
See what contempt is fall'n on human-kind ;
See wealth abus'd, and dignities misplac'd,
Great titles, offices, and trusts disgrac'd, .
Long lines of ancestry, renown'd of old,
Their noble qualities all quench'd and cold ;
See Bedlam's closetted and hand-cuff'd charge
Surpass'd in phrenzy by the mad at large ;
See great commanders making war a trade,
Great lawyers, lawyers without study made ;
Churchmen, in whose esteem their blest employ
Is odious, and their wages all their joy,
Who, far enough from furnishing their shelves
With Gospel lore, turn infidels themselves ;
See womanhood despis'd, and manhood sham'd
With infamy too nauseous to be nam'd,
Fops at all corners, lady-like in mien,
Civetted fellows, smelt ere they are seen,
Else coarse and rude in manners, and their tongue
On fire with curses, and with nonsense hung,
Now flush'd with drunk'ness, now with whoredom
pale,
Their breath a sample of last night's regale ;

See volunteers in all the vilest arts,
Men well endow'd, of honourable parts,
Design'd by Nature wise, but self-made fools ;
All these, and more like these, were bred at schools.
And if it chance, as sometimes chance it will,
That, though school-bred, the boy be virtuous still ;
Such rare exceptions, shining in the dark,
Prove, rather than impeach, the just remark :
As here and there a twinkling star descried
Serves but to show how black is all beside.
Now look on him, whose very voice in tone
Just echoes thine, whose features are thine own,
And stroke his polish'd cheek of purest red,
And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head,
And say, " My boy, th' unwelcome hour is come,
When thou, transplanted from thy genial home,
Must find a colder soil and bleaker air,
And trust for safety to a stranger's care ;
What character, what turn thou wilt assume
From constant converse with I know not whom ;
Who there will court thy friendship, with what
views,

And, artless as thou art, whom thou wilt choose ;
Though much depends on what thy choice shall be,
Is all chance-medley, and unknown to me."
Canst thou, the tear just trembling on thy lids,
And while the dreadful risk foreseen forbids ;
Free to, and under no constraining force,
Unless the sway of custom warp thy course ;
Lay such a stake upon the losing side,
Merely to gratify so blind a guide ?
Thou canst not ! Nature, pulling at thine heart,
Condemns th' unfatherly, th' imprudent part.

Thou wouldst not, deaf to Nature's tend'rest plea,
Turn him adrift upon a rolling sea,
Nor say, *Go thither*, conscious that there lay
A brood of asps, or quicksands in his way :
Then, only govern'd by the self-same rule
Of nat'ral pity, send him not to school.
No — guard him better. Is he not thine own,
Thyself in miniature, thy flesh, thy bone ?
And hop'st thou not ('t is ev'ry father's hope)
That, since thy strength must with thy years elope,
And thou wilt need some comfort, to assuage
Health's last farewell, a staff of thine old age,
That then, in recompense of all thy cares,
Thy child shall show respect to thy gray hairs,
Befriend thee, of all other friends bereft,
And give thy life it's only cordial left ?
Aware, then, how much danger intervenes,
To compass that good end, forecast the means.
His heart, now passive, yields to thy command ;
Secure it thine, it's key is in thine hand.
If thou desert thy charge, and throw it wide,
Nor heed what guests there enter and abide,
Complain not if attachments lewd and base
Supplant thee in it, and usurp thy place.
But, if thou guard it's sacred chambers sure
From vicious inmates and delights impure,
Either his gratitude shall hold him fast,
And keep him warm and filial to the last ;
Or, if he prove unkind (as who can say
But, being man, and therefore frail, he may ?)
One comfort yet shall cheer thine aged heart,
Howe'er he slight thee, thou hast done thy part.

Oh barb'rous ! wouldst thou with a Gothic hand
Pull down the schools — what ! — all the schools i'
th' land ?

Or throw them up to liv'ry-nags and grooms,
Or turn them into shops and auction-rooms ?
A captious question, sir, (and yours is one,)
Deserves an answer similar, or none.
Wouldst thou, possessor of a flock, employ
(Appris'd that he is such) a careless boy,
And feed him well, and give him handsome pay,
Merely to sleep, and let them run astray ?
Survey our schools and colleges, and see
A sight not much unlike my simile.
From education, as the leading cause,
The public character it's colour draws ;
Thence the prevailing manners take their cast,
Extravagant or sober, loose or chaste.
And, though I would not advertise them yet,
Nor write on each — *This building to be let,*
Unless the world were all prepar'd t' embrace
A plan well worthy to supply their place ;
Yet, backward as they are, and long have been,
To cultivate and keep the MORALS clean,
(Forgive the crime,) I wish them, I confess,
Or better manag'd, or encourag'd less.

TABLE-TALK.

**Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ,
Abjicito. HOR. Lib. i. Epist. 13.**

A. You told me, I remember, " Glory, built
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt ;
The deeds, that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design."
Strange doctrine this ! that without scruple tears
The laurel, that the very lightning spares ;
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war.
And never meant the rule should be applied
To him, that fights with justice on his side.
Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
Reward his mem'ry, dear to ev'ry Muse,
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,
Plants it upon the line that Justice draws,
And will prevail or perish in her cause.
'T is to the virtues of such men, man owes
His portion in the good that Heav'n bestows.
And when recording History displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died,
Where duty placed them, at their country's side ;
The man, that is not mov'd with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,

Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
Who, for the sake of filling with one blast
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.
Think yourself station'd on a tow'ring rock,
To see a people scatter'd like a flock,
Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,
With all the savage thirst a tiger feels ;
Then view him self-proclaim'd in a gazette
Chief monster that has plagu'd the nations yet.
The globe and sceptre in such hands misplac'd,
Those ensigns of dominion, how disgrac'd !
The glass, that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
And Death's own scythe would better speak his pow'r;
Then grace the bony phantom in their stead
With the king's shoulder-knot and gay cockade ;
Clothe the twin-brethren in each other's dress,
The same their occupation and success.

A. 'T is your belief the world was made for man ;
Kings do but reason on the self-same plan :
Maintaining yours, you cannot theirs condemn,
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas ! the pow'r of logic reigns
With much sufficiency in royal brains ;
Such reas'ning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting it's proper base to stand upon.
Man made for kings ! those optics are but dim
That tell you so — say, rather they for him.
That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,
Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.

The diadem, with mighty projects lin'd
To catch renown by ruining mankind,
Is worth, with all it's gold and glitt'ring store,
Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.

Oh ! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom us'd, how little understood !
To pour in Virtue's lap her just reward ;
Keep Vice restrain'd behind a double guard ;
To quell the faction, that affronts the throne,
By silent magnanimity alone ;
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts ;
Watch ev'ry beam Philosophy imparts ;
To give Religion her unbridl'd scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope ;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd ;
Covetous only of a virtuous praise ;
His life a lesson to the land he sways ;
To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw ;
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close
With joy beyond what victory bestows ;
Blest country, where these kingly glories shine !
Blest England, if this happiness be thine !

A. Guard what you say ; the patriotic tribe
Will sneer and charge you with a bribe. — B. A bribe !
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
To lure me to the baseness of a lie :
And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boast,)
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
Those arts be theirs, who hate his gentle reign,
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your smooth eulogium to one crown address'd,
Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

B. Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
Ask'd, when in Hell, to see the royal jail ;
Approv'd their method in all other things ;
“ But where, good sir, do you confine your kings ? ”
“ There,” said his guide, “ the group is full in
view.”

“ Indeed ! ” replied the don, “ there are but few.”
His black interpreter the charge disdain'd —
“ Few, fellow ! — there are all that ever reign'd.”

Wit, undistinguishing, is apt to strike
The guilty and not guilty both alike ;
I grant the sarcasm is too severe,
And we can readily refute it here ;
While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the Sixth Edward's, grace th' historic page.

A. Kings then at last have but the lot of all :
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live, the courtly laureat pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise ;
And many a dunce, whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite :
A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game !
Thus free from censure, overaw'd by fear,
And prais'd for virtues, that they scorn to wear,
The fleeting forms of majesty engage
Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage ;
Then leave their crimes for history to scan,
And ask with busy scorn, “ Was this the man ? ”

I pity kings, whom Worship waits upon
Obsequious from the cradle to the throne ;
Before whose infant eyes the flatt'rer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows ;
Whom Education stiffens into state,
And Death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if Servility with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please ;
If smooth Dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face ;
If smiling peeresses, and simp'ring peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years ;
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving, and disdains the lead ;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,
Should'ring and standing as if stuck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on ;
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, " I pity kings !"

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
Ev'n when he labours for his country's good ;
To see a band, call'd patriot for no cause,
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all th' anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels ;
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong :
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship ; and may I be poor and free !

To be the Table-Talk of clubs up stairs,
To which th' unwash'd artificer repairs,

T' indulge his genius, after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet-intrigue ;
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
To him is relaxation and mere play ;)
To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely censur'd when they fail ;
To doubt the love his fav'rites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend ;
If he indulge a cultivated taste,
His gall'ries with the works of art well grac'd,
To hear it call'd extravagance and waste ;
If these attendants, and if such as these,
Must follow royalty, then welcome ease ;
However humble and confin'd the sphere,
Happy the state, that has not these to fear. [dwelt

A. Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative have
On situations, that they never felt,
Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust
Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
And prate and preach about what others prove,
As if the world and they were hand and glove.
Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares ;
They have their weight to carry, subjects theirs ;
Poets, of all men, ever least regret
Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.
Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse
The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
Should claim my fix'd attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would essay
To turn the course of Helicon that way ;
Nor would the Nine consent the sacred tide
Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,

Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuse
The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and Jews.

A. Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhyme
To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.
When ministers and ministerial arts ;
Patriots, who love good places at their hearts ;
When admirals, extoll'd for standing still,
Or doing nothing with a deal of skill ;
Gen'als, who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay ;
When Freedom, wounded almost to despair,
Though Discontent alone can find out where ;
When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,
I hear as mute as if a syren sung.

Or tell me, if you can, what pow'r maintains
A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains :
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets cast in lead. [elude

B. The cause, though worth the search, may yet
Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.
They take perhaps a well-directed aim,
Who seek it in his climate and his frame.
Lib'ral in all things else, yet Nature here
With stern severity deals out the year.
Winter invades the spring, and often pours
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flow'rs ;
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungential blasts attending curl the streams :
The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
With double toil, and shiver at their work ;
Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
She rears her fav'rite man of all mankind.

His form robust and of elastic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,
Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well-lodg'd, and masculine of course.
Hence Liberty, sweet Liberty inspires
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.
Patient of constitutional controul,
He bears it with meek manliness of soul ;
But if Authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his free-born toe ;
One step beyond the bound'ry of the laws
Fires him at once in Freedom's glorious cause.
Thus proud Prerogative, not much rever'd,
Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard,
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,
Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.

Born in a climate softer far than ours,
Not form'd like us, with such Herculean pow'rs,
The Frenchman, easy, debonair, and brisk,
Give him his lass, his fiddle, and his frisk,
Is always happy, reign whoever may,
And laughs the sense of mis'ry far away.
He drinks his simple bev'rage with a gust ;
And, feasting on an onion and a crust,
We never feel the alacrity and joy,
With which he shouts and carols *Vive le Roy !*
Fill'd with as much true merriment and glee,
As if he heard his king say—" Slave, be free."

Thus happiness depends, as Nature shows,
Less on exterior things than most suppose.
Vigilant over all that he has made,
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid ;

Bids equity throughout his works prevail,
And weighs the nations in an even scale ;
He can encourage Slav'ry to a smile,
And fill with discontent a British isle.

A. Freeman and slave then, if the case be such,
Stand on a level ; and you prove too much :
If all men indiscriminately share
His fost'ring power and tutelary care,
As well be yok'd by Despotism's hand,
As dwell at large in Britain's charter'd land.

B. No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know.
The mind attains beneath her happy reign
The growth, that Nature meant she should attain ;
The varied fields of science, ever new,
Op'ning and wider op'ning on her view,
She ventures onward with a prosp'rous force,
While no base fear impedes her in her course.
Religion, richest favour of the skies,
Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes ;
No shades of superstition blot the day,
Liberty chases all that gloom away ;
The soul emancipated, unoppress'd,
Free to prove all things, and hold fast the best,
Learns much ; and to a thousand list'ning minds
Communicates with joy the good she finds :
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe ;
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,
His spirits rising as his toils increase,
Guards well what arts and industry have won,
And Freedom claims him for her first-born son.

Slaves fight for what were better cast away—
 The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway ;
 But they, that fight for freedom, undertake
 The noblest cause mankind can have at stake ; —
 Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
 A blessing — freedom is the pledge of all.
 O Liberty ! the pris'ner's pleasing dream,
 The poet's muse, his passion, and his theme ;
 Genius is thine, and thou art Fancy's nurse ;
 Lost without thee th' ennobling pow'rs of verse ;
 Heroic song from thy free touch acquires
 It's clearest tone, the rapture it inspires :
 Place me where Winter breathes his keenest air,
 And I will sing, if Liberty be there ;
 And I will sing at Liberty's dear feet,
 In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.

A. Sing where you please ; in such a cause I grant
 An English poet's privilege to rant :
 But is not Freedom — at least is not ours —
 Too apt to play the wanton with her pow'rs,
 Grow freakish, and, o'erleaping ev'ry mound,
 Spread anarchy and terroure all around ?

B. Agreed. But would you sell or slay your horse
 For bounding and curvetting in his course ?
 Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,
 He break away, and seek the distant plain ?
 No. His high mettle, under good control, [goal.
 Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the

Let Discipline employ her wholesome arts ;
 Let magistrates alert perform their parts,
 Not skulk or put on a prudential mask,
 As if their duty were a desp'rate task ;

Let active Laws apply the needful curb
To guard the Peace, that Riot would disturb;
And Liberty, preserv'd from wild excess,
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.
When Tumult lately burst his prison-door,
And set plebeian thousands in a roar;
When he usurp'd Authority's just place,
And dar'd to look his master in the face;
When the rude rabble's watchword was — Destroy!
And blazing London seem'd a second Troy;
Liberty blush'd, and hung her drooping head,
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread;
Blush'd, that effects like these she should produce,
Worse than the deeds of galley-slaves broke loose,
She loses in such storms her very name,
And fierce Licentiousness should bear the blame.

Incomparable gem! thy worth untold; [sold;
Cheap though blood-bought, and thrown away when
May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend
Betray thee, while professing to defend!
Prize it, ye ministers; ye monarchs, spare;
Ye patriots, guard it with a miser's care.

A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found,
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,
The country's need have scantily supplied,
And the last left the scene, when Chatham died.

B. Not so — the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
In him Demosthenes was heard again;
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;
She cloth'd him with authority and awe,
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.

His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave, that dar'd oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose ;
And ev'ry venal stickler for the yoke
Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke,

Such men are rais'd to station and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.
He speaks, and they appear ; to him they owe
Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow ;
To manage with address, to seize with pow'r
The crisis of a dark decisive hour.

So Gideon earn'd a victory not his own ;
Subserviency his praise, and that alone.

Poor England ! thou art a devoted deer,
Beset with every ill but that of fear.
The nations hunt ; all mark thee for a prey ;
They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay,
Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd.
Once Chatham sav'd thee : but who saves thee next ?
Alas ! the tide of pleasure sweeps along
All that should be the boast of British song.
'T is not the wreath, that once adorn'd thy brow,
The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.
Our ancestry, a gallant, Christian race,
Patterns of ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace,
Confess'd a God ; they kneel'd before they fought,
And prais'd him in the victories he wrought.
Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth
Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth ;

Courage ungrac'd by these, affronts the skies,
Is but the fire without the sacrifice.
The stream, that feeds the well-spring of the heart,
Not more invigorates life's noblest part,
Than Virtue quickens with a warmth divine
The pow'rs, that Sin has brought to a decline.

A. Th' inestimable Estimate of Brown
Rose like a paper-kite, and charm'd the town ;
But measures plann'd and executed well,
Shifted the wind that rais'd it, and it fell.
He trod the very self-same ground you tread,
And Victory refuted all he said.

B. And yet his judgment was not fram'd amiss ;
It's error, if it err'd, was merely this —
He thought the dying hour already come,
And a complete recovery struck him dumb.

But that effeminacy, folly, lust,
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must ;
And that a nation shamefully debas'd,
Will be despis'd, and trampled on at last,
Unless sweet Penitence her pow'rs renew ;
Is truth, if History itself be true.
There is a time, and Justice marks the date,
For long-forbearing Clemency to wait ;
That hour elaps'd, th' incurable revolt
Is punish'd, and down comes the thunderbolt.
If Mercy *then* put by the threatening blow,
Must she perform the same kind office *now* ?
May she ! and, if offended Heav'n be still
Accessible, and pray'r prevail, she will.
'T is not, however, insolence and noise,
The tempest of tumultuary joys,

Nor is it yet despondence and dismay
Will win her visits or engage her stay ;
Pray'r only, and the penitential tear,
Can call her smiling down, and fix her here.

But when a country (one that I could name)
In prostitution sinks the sense of shame ;
When infamous Venality, grown bold,
Writes on his bosom, *To be let or sold* ;
When Perjury, that Heav'n-defying vice,
Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price,
Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,
To turn a penny in the way of trade ;
When Av'rice starves (and never hides his face)
Two or three millions of the human race,
And not a tongue inquires, how, where, or when,
Though conscience will have twinges now and then ;
When profanation of the sacred cause
In all it's parts, times, ministry, and laws,
Bespeaks a land, once Christian, fall'n, and lost,
In all, that wars against that title most ;
What follows next let cities of great name,
And regions long since desolate proclaim.
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,
Speak to the present times, and times to come ;
They cry aloud in ev'ry careless ear,
" Stop, while ye may ; suspend your mad career ;
O learn from our example and our fate,
Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late."

Not only Vice disposes and prepares
The mind, that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
To stoop to Tyranny's usurp'd command,
And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand,

(A dire effect, by one of Nature's laws
Unchangeably connected with it's cause ;)
But Providence himself will intervene,
To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene.
All are his instruments ; each form of war,
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,
Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
The storms, that overset the joys of life,
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and Mutiny soon roars
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores ;
The standards of all nations are unfurl'd ;
She has one foe, and that one foe the world.
And, if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with a seal of wrath press'd down,
Obduracy takes place ; callous and tough,
The reprobated race grows judgment proof :
Earth shakes beneath them, and Heav'n roars above ;
But nothing scares them from the course they love.
To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulf, from which is no return.
They trust in navies, and their navies fail —
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail !
They trust in armies, and their courage dies ;
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies ;
But all they trust in withers, as it must,
When He commands, in whom they place no trust.
Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast
A long-despis'd, but now victorious host ;

Tyranny sends the chain, that must abridge
The noble sweep of all their privilege ;
Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock ;
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

A. Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach ?

B. I know the mind, that feels indeed the fire
The Muse imparts, and can command the lyre,
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her soft attention claim,
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of ev'ry feeling line.
But if a deed not tamely to be borne
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,
The strings are swept with such a pow'r, so loud,
The storm of music shakes th' astonish'd crowd.
So, when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,
A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart ; he looks to distant storms ;
He hears the thunder ere the tempest low'rs ;
And, arm'd with strength surpassing human pow'rs,
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name
Of prophet and of poet was the same ;
Hence British poets, too, the priesthood shar'd,
And every hallow'd druid was a bard.
But no prophetic fires to me belong ;
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

A. At Westminster, where little poets strive
To set a distich upon six and five,
Where Discipline helps op'ning buds of sense,
And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,
I was a poet too ; but modern taste
Is so refin'd, and delicate, and chaste,
That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,
Without a creamy smoothness has no charms.
Thus, all success depending on an ear,
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,
If sentiment were sacrific'd to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judg'd a man of sense could scarce do worse,
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

B. Thus reputation is a spur to wit,
And some wits flag through fear of losing it.
Give me the line, that plows it's stately course
Like a proud swan, conq'ring the stream by force ;
That, like some cottage-beauty, strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.
When Labour and when Dulness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,
Beating alternately, in measur'd time,
The clock-work tintinnabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be ;
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him, who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who strains his all into a song ;
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braces, though he was never there ;
Or, having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains ;

A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke —
An art contriv'd to advertise a joke,
So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words — but in the gap between :
Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.
To dally much with subjects mean and low,
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And ev'ry effort ends in push-pin play.
The man that means success, should soar above
A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove ;
Else summoning the Muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipp'd cream.
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then —
Stoop'd from it's highest pitch to pounce a wren.
As if the poet, purposing to wed,
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.

Ages elaps'd ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard.
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Thus Genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling ev'ry region that he chose ;
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose ;
And, tedious years of Gothic darkness pass'd,
Emerg'd all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

A. Is genius only found in epic lays?
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.

Make their heroic pow'rs your own at once,
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

B, These were the chief : each interval of night
Was grac'd with many an undulating light,
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone
A meteor, or a star ; in these the Sun.

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough,
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below.
Like him unnotic'd, I, and such as I,
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly ;
Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land,
An ell or two of prospect we command ;
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddock round.

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart
Had faded, poetry was not an art ;
Language, above all teaching, or if taught,
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
Elegant as simplicity, and warm
As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,
Not prompted, as in our degen'rate days,
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,
Was natural as is the flowing stream,
And yet magnificent — A God the theme !
That theme on Earth exhausted, though above
'T is found as everlasting as his love,
Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things —
The feats of heroes, and the wrath of kings ;
But still, while Virtue kindled his delight,
The song was moral, and so far was right.
'T was thus till Luxury seduc'd the mind
To joys less innocent, as less refin'd ;

Then Genius danc'd a bacchanal ; he crown'd
The brimming goblet, seiz'd the thyrsus, bound
His brows with ivy, rush'd into the field
Of wild imagination, and there reel'd,
The victim of his own lascivious fires,
And, dizzy with delight, profan'd the sacred wires.
Anacreon, Horace, play'd in Greece and Rome
This bedlam part ; and others nearer home. [reign'd
When Cromwell fought for pow'r, and while he
The proud protector of the pow'r he gain'd,
Religion, harsh, intolerant, austere,
Parent of manners like herself severe,
Drew a rough copy of the Christian face
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace ;
The dark and sullen humour of the time
Judg'd ev'ry effort of the Muse a crime ;
Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,
Was lumber in an age so void of taste :
But when the second Charles assum'd the sway,
And arts reviv'd beneath a softer day,
Then, like a bow long forc'd into a curve,
The mind, releas'd from too constrain'd a nerve,
Flew to it's first position with a spring,
That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring.
His court, the dissolute and hateful school,
Of Wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,
Swarm'd with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid
With brutal lust as ever Circe made.
From these a long succession, in the rage
Of rank obscenity, debauch'd their age ;
Nor ceas'd, till, ever anxious to redress
The abuses of her sacred charge, the press,

The Muse instructed a well-nurtur'd train
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,
And claim the palm for purity of song,
That Lewdness had usurp'd and worn so long.
Then decent Pleasantry and sterling Sense,
That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipp'd out of sight, with satire just and keen,
The puppy pack, that had defil'd the scene.

In front of these came Addison. In him
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,
Sublimity and Attic taste, combin'd,
To polish, furnish, and delight, the mind.
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplin'd, complete, compact,
Gave virtue and morality a grace,
That, quite eclipsing Pleasure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
Ev'n on the fools that trampled on their laws.
But he (his musical finesse was such,
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art ;
And ev'ry warbler has his tune by heart.
Nature imparting her satiric gift,
Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
With droll sobriety they rais'd a smile
At Folly's cost, themselves unmov'd the while.
That constellation set, the world in vain
Must hope to look upon their like again.

A. Are we then left?—B. Not wholly in the dark ;
Wit now and then, struck smartly, shows a spark,
Sufficient to redeem the modern race
From total night and absolute disgrace.

While servile trick and imitative knack
Confine the million in the beaten track,
Perhaps some courser, who disdains the road,
Snuffs up the wind, and flings himself abroad.

Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one ;
Short his career indeed, but ably run ;
Churchill ; himself, unconscious of his pow'rs,
In penury consum'd his idle hours ;
And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown,
Was left to spring by vigour of his own.
Lifted at length, by dignity of thought
And dint of genius, to an affluent lot,
He laid his head in Luxury's soft lap,
And took, too often, there his easy nap.
If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
'T was negligence in him, not want of worth.
Surly, and slovenly, and bold, and coarse,
Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,
Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
Always at speed, and never drawing bit,
He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,
And so disdain'd the rules he understood,
The laurel seem'd to wait on his command,
He snatch'd it rudely from the Muses' hand.
Nature, exerting an unwearied pow'r,
Forms, opens, and gives scent to ev'ry flow'r ;
Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads :
She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes ; [known,
And charms the woodland scenes, and wilds un-
With artless airs and concerts of her own :

But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence —
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought ;
Fancy, that from the bow, that spans the sky,
Brings colours, dipp'd in Heav'n, that never die ;
A soul exalted above Earth, a mind
Skill'd in the characters that form mankind ;
And, as the Sun in rising beauty dress'd,
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
Ere yet his race begins, it's glorious close ;
An eye like his to catch the distant goal ;
Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,
Like his to shed illuminating rays
On ev'ry scene and subject it surveys :
Thus grac'd, the man asserts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.
Pity Religion has so seldom found
A skilful guide into poetic ground ! [stray,
The flow'rs would spring where'er she deign'd to
And ev'ry Muse attend her in her way.
Virtue indeed meets many a rhyming friend,
And many a compliment politely penn'd ;
But, unattir'd in that becoming vest
Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd,
Stands in the desert, shiv'ring and forlorn,
A wint'ry figure, like a wither'd thorn.
The shelves are full, all other themes are sped ;
Hackney'd and worn to the last flimsy thread,
Satire has long since done his best ; and curst
And loathsome Ribaldry has done his worst ;

Fancy has sported all her pow'rs away
 In tales, in trifles, and in children's play ;
 And 't is the sad complaint, and almost true,
 Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new.
 'T were new indeed to see a bard all fire,
 Touch'd with a coal from Heav'n, assume the
 lyre,

And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,
 With more than mortal music on his tongue,
 That He, who died below, and reigns above,
 Inspires the song, and that his name is Love.

For, after all, if merely to beguile,
 By flowing numbers and a flow'ry style,
 The tædium that the lazy rich endure,
 Which now and then sweet poetry may cure ;
 Or, if to see the name of idle self,
 Stamp'd on the well-bound quarto, grace the shelf,
 To float a bubble on the breath of Fame,
 Prompt his endeavour and engage his aim,
 Debas'd to servile purposes of pride,
 How are the pow'rs of genius misapplied !
 The gift, whose office is the Giver's praise,
 To trace him in his word, his works, his ways !
 Then spread the rich discov'ry, and invite
 Mankind to share in the divine delight,
 Distorted from it's use and just design,
 To make the pitiful possessor shine.
 To purchase, at the fool-frequented fair
 Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,
 Is profanation of the basest kind —
 Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.

A. Hail Sternhold, then ; and Hopkins, hail!—

B. Amen.

If flatt'ry, folly, lust, employ the pen ;
 If acrimony, slander, and abuse,
 Give it a charge to blacken and traduce ;
 Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's eas
 With all that fancy can invent to please,
 Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,
 One madrigal of theirs is worth them all.

A. 'T would thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
 To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

B. No matter — we could shift when they were
 not ;
 And should, no doubt, if they were all forgot.

CONVERSATION.

*Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
 Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam litora, nec quæ
 Saxosæ inter decurrunt flumina valles.*

Virg. Ecl. v.

THOUGH Nature weigh our talents, and dispense
 To ev'ry man his modicum of sense,
 And Conversation in it's better part
 May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art,
 Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
 On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
 Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse,
 But talking is not always to converse ;
 Not more distinct from harmony divine,
 The constant creaking of a country sign.

As Alphabets in ivory employ,
Hour after hour, the yet unletter'd boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee
Those seeds of science called his A B C ;
So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witness it's insignificant result,
Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to sport with, and pass time away.
Collect at ev'ning what the day brought forth,
Compress the sum into it's solid worth,
And if it weigh th' importance of a fly,
The scales are false, or algebra a lie.
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought !
But all shall give account of ev'ry wrong,
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue ;
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at a market-price ;
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.

There is a prurience in the speech of some,
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them
dumb :

His wise forbearance has their end in view,
They fill their measure, and receive their due.
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,
Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
And shut up ev'ry satyr in his den.
O come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth !

Infectious as impure, your blighting pow'r
Taints in it's rudiments the promis'd flow'r ;
It's odour perish'd, and it's charming hue,
Thenceforth 't is hateful, for it smells of you.
Not ev'n the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,
Affords a plea allowable or just
For making speech the pamperer of lust ;
But when the breath of age commits the fault,
'T is nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
No longer fruitful, and no longer green ;
The sapless wood divested of the bark,
Grows fungous, and takes fire at ev'ry spark.

Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife —
Some men have surely then a peaceful life ;
Whatever subject occupy discourse,
The feats of Vestris, or the naval force,
Asseveration blust'ring in your face
Makes contradiction such a hopeless case :
In ev'ry tale they tell, or false or true,
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
With oaths like rivets forc'd into the brain ;
And ev'n when sober truth prevails throughout,
They swear it, till affirmance breeds a doubt.
A Persian, humble servant of the Sun,
Who, though devout, yet bigotry had none,
Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,
With adjurations ev'ry word impress,
Suppos'd the man a bishop, or at least,
God's name so much upon his lips, a priest ;

Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,
And begg'd an int'rest in his frequent pray'rs.

Go, quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,
Henceforth associate in one common herd ;
Religion, virtue, reason, common sense,
Pronounce your human form a false pretence ;
A mere disguise, in which a devil lurks,
Who yet betrays his secret by his works.

Ye pow'rs who rule the tongue, if such there are,
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,
A duel in the form of a debate.
The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
For opposition gives opinion strength,
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-dispos'd to death.
O thwart me not, Sir Soph, at ev'ry turn,
Nor carp at ev'ry flaw you may discern ;
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not surely always in the wrong ;
'T is hard if all is false that I advance,
A fool must now and then be right by chance.
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame ;
No—there I grant the privilege I claim ;
A disputable point is no man's ground ;
Rove where you please, 't is common all around.
Discourse may want an animated — No,
To brush the surface, and to make it flow ;
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.

The mark, at which my juster aim I take,
Is contradiction for it's own dear sake.
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch ;
Adopt his own, 't is equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapp'd again ;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himself deceiv'd, and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite,
A noisy man is always in the right,
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly — " To be sure — no doubt !"
Dubius is such a scrupulous good man —
Yes — you may catch him tripping, if you can.
He would not, with a peremptory tone,
Assert the nose upon his face his own ;
With hesitation admirably slow,
He humbly hopes — presumes — it may be so.
His evidence, if he were call'd by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense ;
Knows what he knows, as if he knew it not ;
What he remembers seems to have forgot ;
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
Centring at last in having none at all,
Yct, though he tease and balk your list'ning ear,
He makes one useful point exceeding clear ;

Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme
A sceptic in philosophy may seem,
Reduc'd to practice, his beloved rule
Would only prove him a consummate fool ;
Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
Fate having plac'd all truth above his reach,
His ambiguities his total sum,
He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,
The positive pronounce without dismay ;
Their want of light and intellect supplied
By sparks absurdity strikes out of pride.
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are decisive, clear, and strong ;
Where others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course ;
Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
And gains remote conclusions at a jump :
Their own defect, invisible to them,
Seen in another, they at once condemn ;
And, though self-idoliz'd in ev'ry case,
Hate their own likeness in a brother's face.
The cause is plain, and not to be denied,
The proud are always most provok'd by pride.
Few competitions but engender spite ;
And those the most, where neither has a right.

The point of honour has been deem'd of use,
To teach good manners, and to curb abuse ;
Admit it true, the consequence is clear,
Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,
And, at the bottom barb'rous still and rude,
We are restrain'd, indeed, but not subdu'd.

The very remedy, however sure,
Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,
And savage in it's principle appears,
Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.
'T is hard, indeed, if nothing will defend
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end ;
That now and then a hero must de cease,
That the surviving world may live in peace.
Perhaps at last close scrutiny may show
The practice dastardly, and mean, and low ;
That men engage in it compell'd by force,
And fear, not courage, is it's proper source :
The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear
Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.
At least to trample on our Maker's laws,
And hazard life for any or no cause,
To rush into a fix'd eternal state
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
Or send another shiv'ring to the bar
With all the guilt of such unnat'ral war,
Whatever Use may urge, or Honour plead,
On Reason's verdict is a madman's deed.
Am I to set my life upon a throw,
Because a bear is rude and surly ? No —
A moral, sensible, and well-bred man
Will not affront me ; and no other can.
Were I empower'd to regulate the lists,
They should encounter with well-loaded fists ;
A Trojan combat would be something new,
Let Dares beat Entellus black and blue ;
Then each might show, to his admiring friends,
In honourable bumps his rich amends,

And carry, in contusions of his skull,
A satisfactory receipt in full.

A story, in which native humour reigns,
Is often useful, always entertains :
A graver fact, enlisted on your side,
May furnish illustration, well applied ;
But sedentary weavers of long tales
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.
'Tis the most asinine employ on Earth,
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,
And echo conversations, dull and dry,
Embellish'd with—" He said," and " So said I."
At ev'ry interview their route the same,
The repetition makes attention lame :
We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,
And in the saddest part cry—" Droll, indeed !"
The path of narrative with care pursue,
Still making probability your clew ;
On all the vestiges of truth attend,
And let them guide you to a decent end.
Of all ambitions man may entertain,
The worst, that can invade a fickle brain,
Is that which angles hourly for surprise,
And baits it's hook with prodigies and lies.
Credulous infancy, or age as weak,
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,
Who, to please others, will themselves disgrace,
Yet please not, but affront you to your face.
A great retailer of this curious ware
Having unloaded and made many stare,
" Can this be true ?"—an arch observer cries,
" Yes," (rather mov'd,) " I saw it with these eyes :

“ Sir ! I believe it on that ground alone ;
I could not, had I seen it with my own.”

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct ;
The language plain, and incidents well link'd ;
Tell not as new what ev'ry body knows,
And, new or old, still hasten to a close ;
There, centring in a focus round and neat,
Let all your rays of information meet.
What neither yields us profit nor delight,
Is like a nurse's lullaby at night ;
Guy Earl of Warwick, and fair Eleanore,
Or giant-killing Jack, would please me more.

The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
Makes half a sentence at a time enough ;
The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
Then pause, and puff — and speak, and pause again.
Such often, like the tube they so admire,
Important triflers ! have more smoke than fire.
Pernicious weed ! whose scent the fair annoys,
Unfriendly to society's chief joys,
Thy worst effect is banishing for hours
The sex, whose presence civilizes ours :
Thou art, indeed, the drug a gard'ner wants,
To poison vermin that infest his plants ;
But are we so to wit and beauty blind,
As to despise the glory of our kind,
And show the softest minds and fairest forms
As little mercy, as he grubs and worms ?
They dare not wait the riotous abuse,
Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,
When wine has giv'n indecent language birth,
And forc'd the flood-gates of licentious mirth ;

For sea-born Venus her attachment shows
Still to that element, from which she rose,
And with a quiet, which no fumes disturb,
Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

Th' emphatic speaker dearly loves t' oppose,
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose.

As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with the magnet, had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,
An extract of his diary — no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stepp'd home again,
Resum'd his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.

I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
“ Adieu, dear sir ! lest you should lose it now.”

I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss-gentleman that 's all perfume ;
The sight 's enough — no need to smell a beau—
Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show ?
His odoriferous attempts to please
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees ;
But we that make no honey, though we sting,
Poets are sometimes apt to maul the thing.
'T is wrong to bring into a mix'd resort,
What makes some sick, and others *d-la-mort* :
An argument of cogence, we may say,
Why such a one should keep himself away.

A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see,
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he :

A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop ; significant and budge ;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge ;
He says but little, and that little said
Owes all it's weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home :
'T is like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage ;
'T is heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love ;
But when unpack'd, your disappointment groans
To find it stuff'd with brick-bats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,
And give us in recitals of disease
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees ;
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped ;
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
Nose, ears, and eyes, seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill ;
And now —alas, for unforeseen mishaps !
They put on a damp nightcap and relapse ;
They thought they must have died, they were so bad ;
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

Some fretful tempers wince at ev'ry touch,
You always do too little, or too much :
You speak with life, in hopes to entertain,
Your elevated voice goes through the brain ;

You fall at once into a lower key,
That's worse — the drone-pipe of an humble-bee.
The southern sash admits too strong a light,
You rise and drop the curtain — now 't is night.
He shakes with cold — you stir the fire and strive
To make a blaze — that 's roasting him alive.
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish ;
With sole — that 's just the sort he would not wish.
He takes what he at first profess'd to loath,
And in due time feeds heartily on both ;
Yet still, o'erclouded with a constant frown,
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to please him vain on ev'ry plan,
Himself should work that wonder, if he can —
Alas ! his efforts double his distress,
He likes yours little, and his own still less.
Thus always teasing others, always teas'd,
His only pleasure is — to be displeas'd.

I pity bashful men, who feel the pain
Of fancied scorn and undeserv'd disdain,
And bear the marks upon a blushing face
Of needless shame, and self-impos'd disgrace.
Our sensibilities are so acute,
The fear of being silent makes us mute.
We sometimes think we could a speech produce
Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose ;
But being tried, it dies upon the lip,
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip :
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd ;
It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,

By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,
To fear each other, fearing none beside.
The cause, perhaps, inquiry may descry,
Self-searching with an introverted eye,
Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,
The vainest corner of our own vain heart:
For ever aiming at the world's esteem,
Our self-importance ruins it's own scheme;
In other eyes our talents rarely shown,
Become at length so splendid in our own
We dare not risk them into public view,
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.
True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,
Where 't is a shame to be asham'd t' appear:
Humility the parent of the first,
The last by Vanity produc'd and nurs'd.
The circle form'd, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate; [show
" Yes, ma'am," and " No, ma'am," utter'd softly,
Ev'ry five minutes how the minutes go;
Each individual suff'ring a constraint
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint,
As if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry;
And finds a changing climate a happy source
Of wise reflection, and well-tim'd discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are,
And coughs, and rheums, and phthisic, and catarrh.

That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Fill'd up at last with interesting news,
Who danc'd with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed :
But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 't were treason against English laws.
The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
As from a sev'n years' transportation, home,
And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
Recov'ring what we lost we know not how,
The faculties, that seem'd reduc'd to nought,
Expression and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,
I give him over as a desp'rate case.
Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,
Never, if honest ones, when death is sure ;
And though the fox he follows may be tam'd,
A mere fox-foll'wer never is reclaim'd.
Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,
Whose only fit companion is his horse ;
Or if, deserving of a better doom,
The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.
Yet ev'n the rogue that serves him, though he stand,
To take his honour's orders, cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow-grooms with much good sense,
Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.
If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,
Where can at last his jockeyship retire ?
O to the club, the scene of savage joys,
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise ;
There, in the sweet society of those,
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,

Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd,
Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand
Giv'n him a soul, and bade him understand;
The reas'ning pow'r vouchsaf'd of course inferr'd
The pow'r to clothe that reason with his word;
For all is perfect, that God works on Earth,
And he, that gives conception, aids the birth.
If this be plain, 't is plainly understood,
What uses of his boon the giver would.
The Mind, dispatch'd upon her busy toil,
Should range where Providence has bless'd the soil;
Visiting ev'ry flow'r with labour meet,
And gath'ring all her treasures sweet by sweet,
She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,
That good diffus'd may more abundant grow,
And speech may praise the pow'r that bids it flow.
Will the sweet warbler of the livelong night,
That fills the list'ning lover with delight,
Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,
To learn the twitt'ring of a meaner bird?
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice?
No — Nature, unsophistocated by man,
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan;
The melody, that was at first design'd
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of her six thousand years.

Yet Fashion, leader of a chatt'ring train,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,
Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,
And would degrade her vot'ry to an ape,
The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong,
Holds a usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue ;
There sits and prompts him, with his own disgrace,
Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
And, when accomplish'd in her wayward school,
Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool.
'T is an unalterable fix'd decree,
That none could frame or ratify but she,
That Heav'n and Hell, and righteousness and sin,
Snarcs in his path, and foes that lurk within,
God and his attributes, (a field of day
Where 't is an angel's happiness to stray,)
Fruits of his love and wonders of his might,
Be never nam'd in ears esteem'd polite.
That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,
Shall stand proscrib'd, a madman or a knave,
A close designer not to be believ'd,
Or, if excus'd that charge, at least deceiv'd.
Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,
Give it the breast, or stop it's mouth with pap !
Is it incredible, or can it seem
A dream to any, except those that dream,
That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire,
Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire ?
Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,
And veil your daring crest that braves the skies ;
That air of insolence affronts your God,
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod :

Now, in a posture that becomes you more
 Than that heroic strut assum'd before,
 Know, your arrears with ev'ry hour accrue
 For mercy shown, while wrath is justly due.
 The time is short, and there are souls on Earth,
 Though future pain may serve for present mirth,
 Acquainted with the woes, that fear or shame,
 By Fashion taught, forbade them once to name,
 And, having felt the pangs you deem a jest,
 Have prov'd them truths too big to be express'd.
 Go seek on Revelation's hallow'd ground,
 Sure to succeed, the remedy they found ;
 Touch'd by that pow'r that you have dar'd to mock,
 That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,
 Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,
 That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happen'd on a solemn even-tide,
 Soon after He that was our Surety died,
 Two bosom friends each pensively inclin'd,
 The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
 Sought their own village, busied as they went
 In musings worthy of the great event :
 They spake of him they lov'd, of him whose life,
 Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,
 Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
 A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
 The recollection, like a vein of ore,
 The farther trac'd, enrich'd them still the more ;
 They thought him, and they justly thought him,
 one

Sent to do more than he appear'd t' have done ;
 T' exalt a people, and to place them high
 Above all else, and wonder'd he should die.

Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them with a kind engaging air
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well
The tender theme, on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, "The night," they said, "is
near,

We must not now be parted, sojourn here."
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And, made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, "'T was the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say,
Did they not burn within us by the way?"

Now theirs was converse, such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves:
Their views indeed were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at him.
Christ and his character their only scope,
Their object, and their subject, and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,
Found him as prompt, as their desire was true,
To spread the new-born glories in their view.
Well — what are ages and the lapse of time
Match'd against truths, as lasting as sublime?
Can length of years on God himself exact,
Or make that fiction, which was once a fact?
No — marble and recording brass decay,
And like the graver's mem'ry pass away;

The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust :
But truth divine for ever stands secure,
It's head is guarded as it's base is sure ;
Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years,
The pillar of th' eternal plan appears,
The raving storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that architect, who built the skies.
Hearts may be found, that harbour at this hour
That love of Christ, and all it's quick'ning pow'r ;
And lips unstain'd by folly or by strife,
Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
Tastes of it's healthful origin, and flows
A Jordan for th' ablution of our woes.
O days of Heav'n, and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heav'nly days,
When souls drawn upwards in communion sweet
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,
Discourse, as if releas'd and safe at home,
Of dangers past, and wonders yet to come,
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted Rest.

“ What, always dreaming over heav'nly things,
Like angel-heads in stone with pigeon-wings ?
Canting and whining out all day the word,
And half the night ? fanatic and absurd !
Mine be the friend less frequent in his pray'rs,
Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,
Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,
And chase the splenetic dull hours away ;
Content on Earth in earthly things to shine,
Who waits for Heav'n ere he becomes divine,

Leaves saints t' enjoy those altitudes they teach,
And plucks the fruit plac'd more within his reach."

Well spoken, Advocate of sin and shame,
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.
Is sparkling wit the World's exclusive right?
The fix'd fee-simple of the vain and light?
Can hopes of Heav'n, bright prospects of an hour,
That come to waft us out of Sorrow's pow'r,
Obscure or quench a faculty, that finds
It's happiest soil in the serenest minds?
Religion curbs indeed it's wanton play,
And brings the trifler under rig'rous sway,
But gives it usefulness unknown before,
And, purifying, makes it shine the more.
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,
A beam that aids, but never grieves the sight;
Vig'rous in age as in the flush of youth,
'Tis always active on the side of truth;
Temp'rance and peace insure it's healthful state,
And make it brightest at it's latest date.
Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)
A vet'ran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-ey'd;
A man that would have foil'd at their own play
A dozen would-bes of the modern day;
Who, when occasion justified it's use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,

His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear :
Yet above all his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the Gospel theme ;
'There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he lov'd so well.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
When some green heads, as void of wit as thought,
Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,
And wiser men's ability pretence.
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,
'Their fragrant mem'ry will outlast their tomb,
Embalm'd for ever in it's own perfume.
And to say truth, though in it's early prime,
And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,
That in the valley of decline are lost,
And Virtue with peculiar charms appears,
Crown'd with the garland of life's blooming years ;
Yet Age, by long experience well inform'd,
Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,
That fire abated, which impels rash youth,
Proud of his speed, to overshoot the truth,
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,
And claims a rev'rence in it's short'ning day,
That 't is an honour and a joy to pay.
The fruits of Age, less fair, are yet more sound,
Than those a brighter season pours around ;

And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,
Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure.

What is fanatic phrenzy, scorn'd so much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?
I grant it dang'rous, and approve your fear,
That fire is catching, if you draw too near ;
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.
To tremble (as the creature of an hour
Ought at the view of an almighty Pow'r)
Before his presence, at whose awful throne
All tremble in all worlds, except our own,
To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,
Though common sense, allow'd a casting voice,
And free from bias, must approve the choice,
Convicts a man fanatic in th' extreme,
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.
But that disease, when soberly defin'd,
Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind ;
It views the truth with a distorted eye,
And either warps or lays it useless by ;
'T is narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
It's sordid nourishment from man's applause ;
And while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,
Presumes itself chief fav'rite of the skies.
'T is such a light as putrefaction breeds
In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds,
Shines in the dark, but, usher'd into day,
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is compos'd
Of hearts in union mutually disclos'd ;

And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,
'Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallow'd name
Form in it's stead, a covenant of shame,
A dark confed'racy against the laws
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause :
They build each other up with dreadful skill,
As bastions set point blank against God's will :
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
Deeply resolv'd to shut a Saviour out ;
Call legions up from Hell to back the deed ;
And, curs'd with conquest, finally succeed.
But souls, that carry on a blest exchange
Of joys, they meet with in their heav'nly range,
And with a fearless confidence make known
The sorrows, sympathy esteems it's own,
Daily derive increasing light and force
From such communion in their pleasant course,
Feel less the journey's roughness and its length
Meet their opposers with united strength,
And, one in heart, in int'rest, and design,
Gird up each other to the race divine.

But Conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow, like waters after summer show'rs,
Not as if rais'd by mere mehanic pow'rs.
The Christian, in whose soul, though now distress'd,
Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
When all his glowing language issu'd forth
With God's deep stamp upon it's current worth,
Will speak without disguise, and must impart,
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,

Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,
Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.

The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
And give the strain the compass it demands.

Strange tidings these to tell a World, who treat
All but their own experience as deceit !

Will they believe, though credulous enough,
To swallow much upon much weaker proof,
That there are blest inhabitants of Earth,
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estrang'd
From things terrestrial, and divinely chang'd,
Their very language of a kind, that speaks
The soul's sure int'rest in the good she seeks,
Who deal with Scripture, it's importance felt,
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,
And in the silent watches of the night,
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,
The social walk, or solitary ride,
Keep still the dear companion at their side ?

No — shame upon a self-disgracing age,
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage
With such a jest, as fill'd with hellish glee
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he ;

But veneration or respect finds none,
Save from the subjects of that work alone.

The World grown old her deep discernment shows,
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace ;

Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,
And finds hypocrisy close lurking there ;
And, serving God herself through mere constraint,
Concludes his unfeign'd love of him a feint.
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the World shall know it too,)
That since the flow'rs of Eden felt the blast,
That after man's defection laid all waste,
Sincerity tow'rs the heart-searching God
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor shall be found in unregen'rate souls,
'Till the last fire burn all between the Poles.
Sincerity ! why 't is his only pride,
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,
He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his just demands require.
Without it his pretensions were as vain,
As having it he deems the World's disdain ;
That great defect would cost him not alone
Man's favourable judgment, but his own ;
His birthright shaken, and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.
Retort the charge, and let the World be told
She boasts a confidence she does not hold ;
That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread :
That while in health the ground of her support
Is madly to forget that life is short ;
That sick she trembles, knowing she must die,
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie ;
That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,
She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives,

Her utmost reach, historical assent,
The doctrines warp'd to what they never meant ;
That truth itself is in her head as dull
And useless as a candle in a scull,
And all her love of God a groundless claim,
A trick upon the canvass, painted flame.
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,
And all her censures of the work of grace,
Are insincere, meant only to conceal
A dread she would not, yet is forc'd to feel ;
That in her heart the Christian she reveres,
And while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,
As smiths and joiners perfect a design ;
At least we moderns, our attention less,
Beyond th' example of our sires digress,
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.
The World and I fortuitously met ;
I ow'd a trifle and have paid the debt ;
She did me wrong, I recompens'd the deed,
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps however as some years have pass'd,
Since she and I convers'd together last,
And I have liv'd recluse, in rural shades,
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,
Great changes and new manners have occur'd,
And blest reforms, that I have never heard,
And she may now be as discreet and wise,
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.
Sobriety perhaps may now be found,
Where once Intoxication press'd the ground ;

The subtle and injurious may be just,
And he grown chaste, that was the slave of lust ;
Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd ;
Charity may relax the miser's fist ;
The gamester may have cast his cards away,
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 't is hard for me to state)
That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,
Reviv'd are hast'ning into fresh repute,
And gods and goddesses, discarded long
Like useless lumber, or a stroller's song,
Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again ;
That certain feasts are instituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow ;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To consecrate our few remaining groves,
And Echo learns politely to repeat
The praise of names for ages obsolete ;
That having prov'd the weakness, it should seem,
Of Revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the passions under sober sway,
And give the moral springs their proper play,
They mean to try what may at last be done,
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Rome for English use.
May such success attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embellish man,
Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taste, and brighten up his parts,

Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learn'd at the bar, in the palaestra bold,
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,
And teach the softer not to copy theirs :
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.
'T is time, however, if the case stands thus,
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,
To build our altar, confident and bold,
And say as stern Elijah said of old,
The strife now stands upon a fair award,
If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord :
If he be silent, faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

Digression is so much in modern use,
Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,
Some never seem so wide of their intent,
As when returning to the theme they meant ;
As mendicants, whose business is to roam,
Make ev'ry parish but their own their home.
Though such continual zig-zags in a book,
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
And I had rather creep to what is true,
Than rove and stagger with no mark in view ;
Yet to consult a little, seem'd no crime,
The freakish humour of the present time :
But now to gather up what seems dispers'd,
And touch the subject I design'd at first,
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,
Best for the public, and my wisest part.
And first let no man charge me, that I mean
To close in sable ev'ry social scene,

And give good company a face severe,
As if they met around a father's bier ;
For tell some men, that pleasure all their bent,
And laughter all their work, is life mis-spent,
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,
" Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry."
To find the medium asks some share of wit,
And therefore 't is a mark fools never hit :
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
Whose glory with a light, that never fades,
Shoots between scatter'd rocks and op'ning shades,
And, while it shows the land the soul desires,
The language of the land she seeks inspires.
Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure ;
Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
Pursues the course, that Truth and Nature teach ;
No longer labours merely to produce
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use :
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,
Sprightly and fresh, enriches ev'ry theme,
While all the happy man possess'd before,
The gift of Nature, or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design,
For which Heav'n form'd the faculty divine.
So should an idiot, while at large he strays,
Find the sweet lyre, on which an artist plays,
With rash and awkward force the chord he shakes,
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes ;
But let the wise and well-instructed hand
Once take the shell beneath his just command,

In gentle sounds it seems as it complain'd
Of the rude injuries it late sustain'd,
Till tun'd at length to some immortal song,
It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise along.

VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK,
DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF
JUAN FERNANDEZ.

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute ;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O Solitude ! where are the charms,
That sages have seen in thy face ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech,
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts, that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see ;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
O, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again !

My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Religion ! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word !
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this Earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Never sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smil'd when a sabbath appear'd.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land, I shall visit no more.
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind !
Compar'd with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there ;
But alas ! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There 's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

THE DIVERTING

HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
" Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

" To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.

“ My sister, and my sister’s child,
Myself, and children three,
Will fill the chaise ; so you must ride
On horseback after we.”

He soon replied, “ I do admire
Of woman-kind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done,

“ I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go.”

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, “ That ’s well said ;
And, for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish’d with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.”

John Gilpin kiss’d his loving wife ;
O’erjoy’d was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow’d
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay’d,
Where they did all get in ;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seiz'd fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again ;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,
Although it griev'd him sore ;
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'T was long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs,
" The wine is left behind !"

" Good lack !" quoth he — " yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul !)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she lov'd,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So, "Fair and softly," John he cried,
But John he cried in vain ;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought ;
Away went hat and wig ;
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung ;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all ;
And ev'ry soul cried out, " Well done !"
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin — who but he ?
His fame soon spread around,
" He carries weight ! he rides a race !
'T is for a thousand pound !"

And still as fast as he drew near,
'T was wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke,
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle brac'd;
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin! — Here 's the
house —"

They all at once did cry;

"The dinner waits, and we are tir'd;"
Said Gilpin — "So am I!"

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclin'd to tarry there;
For why? — his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong ;
So did he fly — which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amaz'd to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :

“ What news ? what news ? your tidings tell ;
Tell me you must and shall —
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all ? ”

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And lov'd a timely joke ;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke :

“ I came because your horse would come ;
And, if I well forbode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,
They are upon the road. ”

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in :

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in it's kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus show'd his ready wit,
" My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

" But let me scrape the dirt away,
That hangs upon your face ;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case."

Said John, " It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

So turning to his horse, he said,
" I am in haste to dine ;
'T was for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine."

Ah luckless speech, and bootless boast !
For which he paid full dear ;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear ;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig :
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why ? — they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half-a-crown ;

And thus unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
“ This shall be yours, when you bring back
My husband safe and well.”

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back again ;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein ;

But not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frightened more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
The lumb'ring of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scamp'ring in the rear,
They rais'd the hue and cry : —

“ Stop thief ! stop thief ! — a highwayman ! ”
Not one of them was mute ;
And all and each that pass'd that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space ;
The toll-men thinking as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town ;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, Long live the King,
And Gilpin long live he ;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see !

AN EPISTLE

TO

JOSEPH HILL, Esq.

DEAR JOSEPH — five-and-twenty years ago —
Alas, how time escapes ! — 't is even so —
With frequent intercourse, and always sweet,
And always friendly, we were wont to cheat
A tedious hour — and now we never meet !
As some grave gentleman in Terence says,
('T was therefore much the same in ancient days,)

Good lack, we know not what to-morrow brings —
Strange fluctuation of all human things !
True. Changes will befall, and friends may part,
But distance only cannot change the heart :
And, were I call'd to prove th' assertion true,
One proof should serve — a reference to you.

Whence comes it then, that in the wane of life,
Though nothing have occur'd to kindle strife,
We find the friends we fancied we had won,
Though num'rous once, reduc'd to few or none ?
Can gold grow worthless, that has stood the touch ?
No ; gold they seem'd, but they were never such.

Horatio's servant once, with bow and cringe,
Swinging the parlour door upon it's hinge,
Dreading a negative, and overaw'd
Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad.
“ Go, fellow !—whither ? ”—turning short about —
“ Nay. Stay at home—you 're always going out.”
“ 'T is but a step, sir, just at the street's end.”
“ For what ? ”—“ An please you, sir, to see a friend.”
“ A friend ! ” Horatio cried, and seem'd to start —
“ Yea marry shalt thou, and with all my heart. —
And fetch my cloak ; for, though the night be raw,
I'll see him too — the first I ever saw.”

I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,
And was his plaything often when a child ;
But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,
Else he was seldom bitter or morose.
Perhaps his confidence just then betray'd,
His grief might prompt him with the speech he made ;
Perhaps 't was mere good-humour gave it birth,
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth.

Howe'er it was, his language in my mind,
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.

But not to moralize too much, and strain,
To prove an evil, of which all complain,
(I hate long arguments verbosely spun,)
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done.
Once on a time an emp'ror, a wise man,
No matter where, in China, or Japan,
Decreed, that whosoever should offend
Against the well-known duties of a friend,
Convicted once should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare.
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was naught within, and all found out.

O happy Britain ! we have not to fear
Such hard and arbitrary measure here ;
Else, could a law, like that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple state,
Some few, that I have known in days of old,
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold ;
While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow,
Might traverse England safely to and fro,
An honest man, close-button'd to the chin,
Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within.

YARDLEY OAK.

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all,
That once liv'd here, thy brethren, at my birth,
(Since which I number threescore winters past,)
A shatter'd vet'ran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,

As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relics of ages ! Could a mind, imbued
With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
I might with rev'rence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurified by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscrib'd, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once ; a cup and ball,
Which babes might play with ; and the thievish jay,
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs
And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
But Fate thy growth decreed ; autumnal rains
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle ; and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams. Disprove it, if ye can,
Ye reas'ners broad awake, whose busy search
Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away !

Thou fell'st mature ; and in the loamy clod
Swelling with vegetative force instinct
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled 'Twins,
Now stars ; two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact ;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fost'ring propitious, thou becam'st a twig.

Who liv'd, when thou wast such ? Oh, couldst
thou speak,
As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events
Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recov'ring, and mis-stated setting right——
Desp'rate attempt, till trees shall speak again !

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the
woods ;
And Time hath made thee what thou art — a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign ; and the num'rous flocks,
That graz'd it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outliv'd
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth.

While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
Of treeship — first a seedling, hid in grass ;
Then twig ; then sapling ; and, as cent'ry roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheav'd above the soil, and sides emboss'd
With prominent wens globose — till at the last
The rottenness, which time is charged to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.

What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all,
That we account most durable below !
Change is the diet on which all subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds —
Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life
In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine passing thought, e'en in her coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain
The force that agitates, not unimpair'd ;
But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe.

Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,

Slow, into such magnificent decay.

Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root — and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents, [deck
That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the
Of some flagg'd admiral ; and tortuous arms,
The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
Warp'd into tough knee-timber *, many a load !
But the axe spar'd thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply
The bottomless demands of contest, wag'd
For senatorial honours. Thus to Time
The task was left to whittle thee away
With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,
Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserv'd,
Achiev'd a labour, which had far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.

Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing nought, but the scoop'd rind, that seems
An huge throat, calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou couldst ill requite.

* Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.

Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
 A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
 Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp
 The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.

So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet
 Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
 Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
 Pulveriz'd of venality, a shell
 Stands now, and semblance only of itself!

Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent
 them off
 Long since, and rovers of the forest wild [left
 With bow and shaft, have burnt them. Some have
 A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white;
 And some, memorial none, where once they grew.
 Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
 Proof not contemptible of what she can,
 Even where death predominates. The spring
 Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force,
 Than yonder upstarts of the neighb'ring wood,
 So much thy juniors, who their birth receiv'd
 Half a millennium since the date of thine.

But since, although well qualified by age
 To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
 May be expected from thee, seated here
 On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
 Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
 Myself the oracle, and will discourse
 In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman ; never gaz'd,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him ; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor ow'd articulation to his ear ;
But, moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heaven
In praise harmonious the first air he drew.
He was excus'd the penalties of dull
Minority. No tutor charg'd his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme.

THE CAST-AWAY.

Obscurer night involv'd the sky ;
Th' Atlantic billows roar'd,
When such a destin'd wretch as I,
Wash'd headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast,
Than he, with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
With warmer wishes sent.

He lov'd them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay :
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away ;
But wag'd with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted ; nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless, perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford ;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delay'd not to bestow.
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them ;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld :
And so long he, with unspent pow'r,
His destiny repell'd :

And ever as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried — “ Adieu !”

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in ev’ry blast,
Could catch the sound no more.
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age
Is wet with Anson’s tear.
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date.
But misery still delights to trace
It’s semblance in another’s case.

No voice divine the storm allay’d,
No light propitious shone ;
When, snatch’d from all effectual aid,
We perish’d, each alone :
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelm’d in deeper gulfs than he.

JAMES BEATTIE.

JAMES BEATTIE, an admired poet and a moralist, was born about 1735, in the county of Kincardine, in Scotland. His father was a small farmer, who, though living in indigence, had imbibed so much of the spirit of his country, that he procured for his son a literary education, first at a parochial school, and then at the college of New Aberdeen, in which he entered as a bursar or exhibitioner. In the intervals of the sessions, James is supposed to have added to his scanty pittance by teaching at a country-school. Returning to Aberdeen, he obtained the situation of assistant to the master of the principal grammar-school, whose daughter he married. From youth he had cultivated a talent for poetry; and in 1760 he ventured to submit the fruit of his studies in this walk to the public, by a volume of "Original Poems and Translations." They were followed, in 1765, by "The Judgment of Paris;" and these performances, which displayed a familiarity with poetic diction, and harmony of versification, seem to have made him favourably known in his neighbourhood.

The interest of the Earl of Errol acquired for him the post of professor of moral philosophy and logic in the Marischal College of Aberdeen; in which capacity he published a work, entitled "An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism," 1770. Being written in a popular manner, it was much read, and gained the author many admirers, especially among the most distinguished members of the Church of England; and, at the suggestion of Lord Mansfield, he was rewarded with a pension of 200*l.* from the King's privy purse.

In 1771 his fame was largely extended by the first part of his "*Minstrel*," a piece the subject of which is the imagined birth and education of a poet. Although the word *Minstrel* is not with much propriety applied to such a person as he represents, and the "*Gothic days*" in which he is placed are not historically to be recognised, yet there is great beauty, both moral and descriptive, in the delineation, and perhaps no writer has managed the Spenserian stanza with more dexterity and harmony. The second part of this poem, which contains the maturer part of the education of the young bard, did not appear till 1774, and then left the work a fragment. But whatever may be the defects of the *Minstrel*, it possesses beauties which will secure it a place among the approved productions of the British muse.

Beattie visited London for the first time in 1771, where he was received with much cordiality by the admirers of his writings, who found equal cause to

love and esteem the author. Not long afterwards, the degree of LL. D. was conferred on him by his college at Aberdeen. In 1777 a new edition, by subscription, was published of his "Essay on Truth," to which were added three Essays on subjects of polite literature. In 1783 he published "Dissertations Moral and Critical," consisting of detached essays, which had formed part of a course of lectures delivered by the author as professor. His last work was "Evidences of the Christian Religion, briefly and plainly stated," 2 vols. 1786. His time was now much occupied with the duties of his station, and particularly with the education of his eldest son, a youth of uncommon promise. His death of a decline was a very severe trial of the father's fortitude and resignation; and it was followed some years after by that of his younger son. These afflictions, with other domestic misfortunes, entirely broke his spirits, and brought him to his grave at Aberdeen, in August, 1803, in the 68th year of his age.

THE MINSTREL;

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

PREFACE.

The design was, to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a Minstrel, that is, as an itinerant poet and musician ; — a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate Spenser in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided ; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject : but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true, only when the poetry is faulty in other respects.

BOOK I.

AH ! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar ;
Ah ! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war ;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown !

And yet the languor of inglorious days,
Not equally oppressive is to all ;
Him, who ne'er lister'd to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear th' obstreperous trump of
Fame ;
Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had he, whose simple tale these artless lines pro-
claim.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore ;
Nor need I here describe in learned lay,
How forth the Minstrel far'd in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array ;
His waving locks and beard all hoary grey :
While from his bending shoulder, decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung :
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
'That a poor villager inspires my strain ;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide :
The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign ;
Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms.
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float :
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the grey linnets carol from the hill.
O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
To please a tyrant, strain the little bill,
But sing what Heaven inspires, and wander where
they will.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand ;
Nor was perfection made for man below.
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow ;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise ;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow ;
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the
eyes.

Then 'grieve not, thou, to whom th' indulgent
Muse

Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire :
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
Th' imperial banquet, and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refin'd ?
No ; let thy heaven-taught soul to Heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resign'd ;
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen ;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
Even from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
(The mansion then no more of joy serene,)
Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride ?

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields !
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields ;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be for-
given ?

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart.
But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
E'er win it's way to thy corrupted heart :
For ah ! it poisons like a scorpion's dart ;
Prompting th' ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
The stern resolve unmov'd by pity's smart,
The troublous day, and long distressful dream.
Return, my roving Muse, resume thy purposed
theme.

There lived in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree ;
Whose sires, perchance, in Faryland might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady ;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie ;
A nation fam'd for song, and beauty's charms ;
Zealous, yet modest ; innocent, though free ;
Patient of toil ; serene amidst alarms ;
Inflexible in faith ; invincible in arms.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock ;
The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd ;
An honest heart was almost all his stock ;
His drink the living water from the rock :
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock ;
And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er
they went.

From labour health, from health contentment
springs :

Contentment opes the source of every joy.
He envied not, he never thought of, kings ;
Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,
That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy :
Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled ;
He mourned no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
For on his vows the blameless Phoebe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a
child.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife ;
Each season look'd delightful as it past,
To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd-life
They never roam'd ; secure beneath the storm
Which in Ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair :
His birth no oracle or seer foretold ;
No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth ;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care ;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth ;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy,
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy ;
Silent when glad ; affectionate, though shy ;
And now his look was most demurely sad ;
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad :
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some be-
lieved him mad.

But why should I his childish feats display ?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled ;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps ; but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head,
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phæbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, released the weary
team.

Th' exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring.
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the woe of any living thing,
By trap, or net ; by arrow, or by sling ;
These he detested ; those he scorn'd to wield ;
He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

Lo ! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine ;
And sees, on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine :
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies ?
Ah ! no : he better knows great Nature's charms
to prize.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake, dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn :
Far to the west the long, long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while ;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil. [smile.
But lo ! the Sun appears ! and heaven, earth, ocean,

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure ! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd !
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound !

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene.
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight :
Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern Sun diffused his dazzling shene.
Even sad vicissitude amused his soul :
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

“ O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom !”
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought,)

“ Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy
gloom,

Of late so grateful in the hour of drought !

Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought

To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake ?

Ah ! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought ?

For now the storm howls mournful through the
brake,

And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

“ Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty
crown'd !

Ah ! see, th' unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,

Have all the solitary vale embrown'd ;

Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound,

The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray :

And hark ! the river, bursting every mound,

Down the vale thunders, and with wasteful sway

Uproots the grove, and rolls the shattered rocks
away.

" Yet such the destiny of all on Earth :
So flourishes and fades majestic Man.
Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
And fostering gales awhile the nursling fan.
O smile, ye Heavens, serene ; ye mildews wan,
Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
Nor lessen of his life the little span.
Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
Old Age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

" And be it so. Let these deplore their doom,
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn :
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to these sad scenes no more return ?
Is yonder wave the Sun's eternal bed ?
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
And Spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

" Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive ?
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live ?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain ?
No : Heaven's immortal springs shall yet arrive,
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through th' eternal year of Love's triumph-
ant reign."

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught.
In sooth, 't was almost all the shepherd knew.
No subtle nor superfluous lore he sought,
Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
"Let man's own sphere," said he, "confine his view,
Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
And much, and oft, he warn'd him, to eschew
Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
By pleasure uneduc'd, unaw'd by lawless might.

"And from the prayer of Want, and plaint of
Woe,

O never, never turn away thine ear!
Forlorn, in this bleak wilderness below,
Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
To others do (the law is not severe)
What to thyself thou wishest to be done.
Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,
And friends, and native land; nor those alone;
All human weal and woe learn thou to make thine
own."

See, in the rear of the warm sunny shower
The visionary boy from shelter fly;
For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant is the sky.
And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting Sun!
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun!
'T is fled afar, ere half thy purpos'd race be run.

Yet couldst thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warm,
This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
And disappointment of her sting disarm.
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire;
Pursue, poor imp, th' imaginary charm,
Indulge gay Hope, and Fancy's pleasing fire:
Fancy and Hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wander'd down the vale.
There would he dream of graves, and corpses pale;
And ghosts that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenc'd by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles
along.

Or, when the setting Moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
And first, a wildly-murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illum'd the vault of
night.

Anon in view a portal's blazon'd arch
Arose ; the trumpet bids the valves unfold :
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond-lance, and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanor bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire ;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-rob'd minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe in-
spire.

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance ;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance ;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze ;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along : with many-colour'd rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scar'd'st the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticler ! who oft hath reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill !
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let harmony aye shut her gentle ear :
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

Forbear, my Muse. Let Love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow!
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls, the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy, in every breeze are borne.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain-side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage-curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping milk-maid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her ærial tour.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme !
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new !
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due !
Blest be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty ;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to th' enraptur'd heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

Hence ! ye who snare and stupefy the mind,
Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane !
Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain !
Hence to dark Errour's den, whose rankling slime
First gave you form ! Hence ! lest the Muse should
deign,
(Though loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme,)
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth !
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amus'd my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom soothe,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide !
Your voice each rugged path of life can smoothe :
For well I know wherever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence abide.

Ah me! neglected on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow, the cottage shut the door.
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legend when the beldame 'gan impart,
Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,
Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart;
Much he the tale admir'd, but more the tuneful
art.

Various and strange was the long-winded tale;
And halls, and knights, and feats of arms, display'd;
Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
And sing enamour'd of the nut-brown maid;
The moon-light revel of the fairy glade;
Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,
And ply in caves th' unutterable trade,
'Midst fiends and spectres, quench the Moon in
blood,
Yell in the midnight storm, or ride th' infuriate flood.

But when to horror his amazement rose,
A gentler strain the beldame would rehearse,
A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
The orphan-babes, and guardian uncle fierce.
O cruel! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart, by lust of lucre sear'd to stone?
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those hopeless orphan-babes by thy fell arts undone.

Behold, with berries smear'd, with brambles torn,
The babes now famish'd lay them down to die :
Amidst the howl of darksome woods forlorn,
Folded in one another's arms they lie ;
Nor friend, nor stranger, hears their dying cry :
" For from the town the man returns no more."
But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st
defy,
This deed with fruitless tears shalt soon deplore,
When Death lays waste thy house, and flames consume thy store.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd one moment Edwin's starting tear,
" But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
And innocence thus die by doom severe ?"
O Edwin ! while thy heart is yet sincere,
Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel :
Dark even at noontide is our mortal sphere ;
But let us hope ; to doubt is to rebel ;
Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to Misery given ;
From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for Heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
To censure Fate, and pious Hope forego :
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of woe.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer day,
Shall the poor gnat, with discontent and rage,
Exclaim that Nature hastens to decay,
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend?
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide through unnumber'd worlds, and ages without
end?

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream;
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem.
Nor is that part, perhaps, what mortals deem;
Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise.
O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies:
For thou art but of dust; be humble, and be wise.

Thus Heaven enlarg'd his soul in riper years.
For Nature gave him strength, and fire, to soar
On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears;
Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore:
And much they grope for Truth, but never hit.
For why? Their powers, inadequate before,
This idle art makes more and more unfit;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blun-
ders wit.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth.
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device
Oft cheer'd the shepherds round their social hearth ;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat, or laughter, at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah ! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

Oft when the winter storm had ceas'd to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along th' horizon blue :
Where, 'midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms describes,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew,
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glitt'ring cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts
rise.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening, with pleasing dread, to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array,
When sulphurous clouds roll'd on th' autumnal day,
Ev'n then he hasten'd from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er Heav'n's rending arch the rattling thunder
ran.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd,
Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly,
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refin'd,
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compar'd of heavenly melan-
choly !

Is there a heart that music cannot melt ?
Alas ! how is that rugged heart forlorn ;
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born ?
He needs not woo the Muse ; he is her scorn.
The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine ;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page ; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine ;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton
swine.

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had plann'd ;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant Muse, though artless, was not mute :
Of elegance as yet he took no care ;
For this of time and culture is the fruit ;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare :
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful, or new,
Sublime, or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
By chance, or search, was offer'd to his view,
He scann'd with curious and romantic eye.
Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
Rous'd him, still keen to listen and to pry.
At last, though long by penury control'd,
And solitude, her soul his graces 'gan unfold.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,
When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
And in their northern cave the storms are bound ;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurl'd ; green hills emerge ; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crown'd ;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go ;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart o'er-
flow.

Here pause, my Gothic lyre, a little while.
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But on this verse if Montague should smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame.
And her applause to me is more than fame ;
For still with truth accords her taste refin'd.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human-
kind.

BOOK II.

Or chance or change O let not man complain,
Else shall he never, never cease to wail;
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel th' assault of Fortune's fickle gale;
Art, empire, Earth itself, to change are doom'd;
Earthquakes have rais'd to Heaven the humble vale,
And gulfs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd;
And where th' Atlantic rolls wide continents have
bloom'd. *

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
Nor search the ancient records of our race,
To learn the dire effects of time and change,
Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.
Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face,
Or hoary hair, I never will repine:
But spare, O Time, what's er of mental grace,
Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is
mine.

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
And smite the Gothic lyre with harsher hand;
Now when I leave that flowery path for aye
Of childhood, where I sported many a day,

* See Plato's *Timeus*.

Warbling and sauntering carelessly along ;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

" Perish the lore that deadens young desire,"
Is the soft tenour of my song no more.
Edwin, tho' lov'd of Heaven, must not aspire
To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy :
But now and then the shades of life explore ;
Though many a sound and sight of woe annoy,
And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer-bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose ;
But soon it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark yonder oaks ! Superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of Heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies, [plies
While each assailing blast increase of strength sup-

And now the downy cheek and deepen'd voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime ;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more mild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he fram'd the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode ;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retired abode.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene.
For rocks on rocks pil'd as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenc'd from the north and east this savage dell.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long, long groves eternal murmur made :
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye, remote, survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold
array'd.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
And, here and there, a solitary tree,
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.
Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high ;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings, to shoot athwart the sky.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noonday beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul :
He minded not the Sun's last trembling gleam,
Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll ;
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole :

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew :
(While Edwin wrapt in wonder listening stood)
“ Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
Scorn'd by the wise and hated by the good !
Ye only can engage the servile brood
Of Levity and Lust, who all their days,
Asham'd of truth and liberty, have woo'd,
And hugg'd the chain, that, glittering on their gaze,
Seems to outshine the pomp of Heaven's empyreal
blaze.

“ Like them, abandon'd to Ambition's sway,
I sought for glory in the paths of guile ;
And fawn'd and smil'd, to plunder and betray,
Myself betray'd and plunder'd all the while ;
So gnaw'd the viper the corroding file ;
But now, with pangs of keen remorse, I rue
Those years of trouble and debasement vile.
Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue !
Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever from my view !

“ The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
And storms of disappointment, all o'erpast,
Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
And if for me no treasure be amass'd,
And if no future age shall hear my name,
I lurk the more secure from fortune's blast,
And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of
fame.

“ The end and the reward of toil is rest.
Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace.
Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possess'd,
Who ever felt his weight of woe decrease ?
Ah ! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride the bosom wring !

“ Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
In the deep dungeon of some Gothic dome,
Where night and desolation ever frown.
Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down ;
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave ;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my
grave.

“ And thither let the village-swain repair ;
And, light of heart, the village-maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-dishevell'd hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.
There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day
Fill all the grove with love's bewitching woe ;
And when mild Evening comes in mantle gray,
Let not the blooming band make haste to go ;
No ghost, nor spell, my long and last abode shall
know.

“ For though I fly to 'scape from Fortune's rage,
And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn :
For virtue lost, and ruin'd man, I mourn.
O man ! creation's pride, Heaven's darling child,
Whom Nature's best, divinest gifts adorn,
Why from thy home are truth and joy exil'd,
And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears
defil'd ?

“ Along yon glittering sky what glory streams !
What majesty attends Night's lovely queen !
Fair laugh our valleys in the vernal beams ;
And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
And all conspire to beautify the scene.
But, in the mental world, what chaos drear ;
What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien !
O when shall that eternal morn appear,
These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to
clear !

“ O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light
Rose from th' abyss ; when dark Confusion driven
Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight !
O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
To blast the fury of oppressive might,
Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the
way !”

Silence ensu'd : and Edwin raised his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
“ And is it thus in courtly life,” he cries,
“ That man to man acts a betrayer's part ?
And dares he thus the gifts of Heaven pervert,
Each social instinct, and sublime desire ?
Hail, Poverty ! if honour, wealth, and art,
If what the great pursue, and learn'd admire,
Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal
fire ! ”

He said, and turn'd away ; nor did the sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employ'd.
The youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy'd :
For now no cloud obscures the starry void ;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills ;
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoy'd ;
A soothing murmur the lone region fills,
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

But he from day to day more anxious grew,
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear.
Nor durst he hope the hermit's tale untrue ;
For man he seem'd to love, and Heaven to fear ;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear
“ Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell !
No more in vain conjecture let me wear
My hours away, but seek the hermit's cell ;
’Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel.”

At early dawn the youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild ; where, in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man : his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a flow'ret
small.

And now the hoary sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching : innocence
Smil'd on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
“ Who art thou, courteous stranger ? and from
whence ?

Why roam thy steps to this sequester'd dale ? ”
“ A shepherd-boy,” the youth replied, “ far hence
My habitation ; hear my artless tale ;
Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

“ Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound ;
And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound,
(For in thy speech I recognise the sound.)
You mourn'd for ruin'd man, and virtue lost,
And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
Pondering on former days by guilt engross'd,
Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.

" But say, in courtly life can craft be learn'd
Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul?
Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearn'd,
Can selfishness the liberal heart control?
Is glory there achiev'd by arts, as foul
As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan?
Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tygers prowl:
Love is the godlike attribute of man.
O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan.

" Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
And give me back the calm, contented mind;
Which, late, exulting, view'd in Nature's frame,
Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfin'd,
Grace, grandeur, and utility combin'd.
Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
Well pleas'd with all, but most with human-kind:
When Fancy roam'd through Nature's works at
will,
Uncheck'd by cold distrust, and uninform'd of
ill."

" Wouldst thou," the sage replied, " in peace return
To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
For if my desultory strain with ruth
And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
Alas! what comfort could thy anguish soothe,
Shouldst thou th' extent of human folly know.
Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to
woe.

“ But let untender thoughts afar be driven ;
Nor venture to arraign the dread decree.
For know, to man, as candidate for Heaven,
The voice of the Eternal said, Be free :
And this divine prerogative to thee
Does virtue, happiness, and Heaven convey ,
For virtue is the child of liberty,
And happiness of virtue ; nor can they
Be free to keep the path, who are not free to stray.

“ Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
Which else might thy young virtue overpower,
And in thy converse I shall find relief,
When the dark shades of melancholy lower ;
For solitude has many a dreary hour,
Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain :
Come often then ; for, haply, in my bower,
Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou may'st gain :
If I one soul improve, I have not liv'd in vain.”

And now, at length, to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of history unrolls her page.
But few, alas ! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness
burn :
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp th' abandon'd
urn !

"Ambition's slippery verge shall mortals tread,
Where ruin's gulf unfathom'd yawns beneath !
Shall life, shall liberty be lost," he said,
"For the vain toys that pomp and power bequeath !
The car of victory, the plume, the wreath,
Defend not from the bolt of fate the brave :
No note the clarion of renown can breathe,
T' alarm the long night of the lonely grave, [wave.
Or check the headlong haste of time's o'erwhelming

"Ah, what avails it to have trac'd the springs,
That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel !
Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings, [steel !
Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with
To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
Heroes, alas ! are things of small concern ;
Could History man's secret heart reveal,
And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not
yearn !

"This praise, O Cheronean sage *, is thine !
(Why should this praise to thee alone belong ?)
All else from Nature's moral path decline,
Lur'd by the toys that captivate the throng ;
To herd in cabinets and camps, among
Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride ;
Or chant of heraldry the drowsy song,
How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

* Plutarch.

" O who of man the story will unfold,
Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
In that elysian age (misnam'd of gold)
The age of love, and innocence and joy,
When all were great and free! man's sole employ
To deck the bosom of his parent earth;
Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
To aid the flow'ret's long-expected birth,
And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of
mirth.

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves!
Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
His eye still smiling, and his heart content.
Then, hand in hand, health, sport, and labour went.
Nature supply'd the wish she taught to crave.
None prowl'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent.
To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave:
No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

But ah! th' historic Muse has never dar'd
To pierce those hallow'd bowers: 't is Fancy's beam
Pour'd on the vision of the enraptured bard,
That paints the charms of that delicious theme.
Then hail sweet Fancy's ray! and hail the dream
That weans the weary soul from guilt and woe!
Careless what others of my choice may deem,
I long, where Love and Fancy lead, to go
And meditate on Heaven, enough of Earth I know."

"I cannot blame thy choice," the sage replied,
"For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways.
And yet, even there, if left without a guide,
The young adventurer unsafely plays.
Eyes dazzl'd long by fiction's gaudy rays
In modest truth no light nor beauty find.
And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had
shin'd ?

"Fancy enervates, while it soothes, the heart,
And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight :
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But wraps the hour of woe in tenfold night.
And often, where no real ills affright,
Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal pain.

"And yet, alas ! the real ills of life
Claim the full vigour of a mind prepar'd,
Prepar'd for patient, long, laborious strife,
Its guide experience, and truth its guard.
We fare on Earth as other men have far'd.
Were they successful ? Let not us despair.
Was disappointment oft their sole reward ?
Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare,
How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd
to bear.

What charms th' historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
To hail the patriot prince, whose pious toils
Sacred to science, liberty, and right,
And peace, through every age divinely bright,
Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind!
Sees yonder Sun, from his meridian height,
A lovelier scene, than virtue thus enshrin'd
In power, and man with man for mutual aid combin'd?

" Hail, sacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd!
Hail, sacred Freedom, when by law restrain'd!
Without you what were man? A grovelling herd
In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain'd.
Sublim'd by you, the Greek and Roman reign'd
In arts unrivall'd: O, to latest days,
In Albion may your influence, unprofan'd,
To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
And prompt the sage's lore, and fire the poet's lays!

" But now let other themes our care engage.
For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,
To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
And from within the cherish'd heart to brace,
Philosophy appears! The gloomy race
By indolence and moping Fancy bred,
Fear, Discontent, Solitude, give place,
And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

Then waken from long lethargy to life
The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought ;
Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
With fell revenge, lust that defies controul,
With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl ;
As Phœbus to the world, is science to the soul.

And Reason now through number, time, and
space,
Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye.
And learns, from facts compar'd, the laws to trace,
Whose long progression leads to Deity.
Can mortal strength presume to soar so high !
Can mortal sight, so oft bedimm'd with tears,
Such glory bear ! — for lo ! the shadows fly
From Nature's face ; confusion disappears,
And order charms the eye, and harmony the ears !

“ In the deep windings of the grove, no more
The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell ;
Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell ;
No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon ;
Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
To ease of fancied pangs the labouring Moon,
Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of
noon.

“ Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
Stunn'd with th' eternal turbulence of waves,
Lo, with dim eyes, that never learn'd to smile,
And trembling hands, the famish'd native craves
Of Heaven his wretched fare ; shivering in caves,
Or scorch'd on rocks, he pines from day to day ;
But Science gives the word ; and lo, he braves
The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
And to a happier land wafts merrily away !

“ And even where Nature loads the teeming plain
With the full pomp of vegetable store,
Her bounty, unimprov'd, is deadly bane :
Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore,
Stretch their enormous gloom ; which to explore
Even Fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood ;
For there, each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,
Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every
flood.

“ 'T was from Philosophy man learn'd to tame
The soil by plenty to intemperance fed.
Lo, from the echoing axe, and thundering flame,
Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled !
The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
Bring health and melody to every vale :
And, from the breezy main, and mountain's head,
Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering
gale.

“ What dire necessities on every hand
Our art, our strength, our fortitude require !
Of foes intestine what a numerous band
Against this little throb of life conspire !
Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
Awhile, and turn aside Death's levell'd dart,
Soothe the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the
heart,
And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

“ Nor less to regulate man's moral frame
Science exerts her all-composing sway. .
Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
Or pines, to indolence and spleen a prey,
Or avarice, a fiend more fierce than they ?
Flee to the shade of Academus' grove ;
Where cares molest not, discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of Truth, breath'd from the
lips of Love.

“ What cannot Art and Industry perform,
When Science plans the progress of their toil !
They smile at penury, disease, and storm ;
And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
Deep-vers'd in man the philosophic sage
Prepares with lenient hand their phrenzy to assuage.

“ 'T is he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
From situation, temper, soil and clime
Explor'd, a nation's various powers can bind,
And various orders, in one form sublime
Of policy, that, midst the wrecks of time,
Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
Th' assault of foreign or domestic crime,
While public faith, and public love sincere,
And industry and law maintain their sway severe.”

Enraptur'd by the hermit's strain, the youth
Proceeds the path of Science to explore.
And now, expanded to the beams of truth,
New energies and charms unknown before,
His mind discloses : Fancy now no more
Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies ;
But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
Aloft from cause to cause exults to rise,
Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan ;
For, mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan ;
The cold desponding breast of sloth to warm,
The flame of industry and genius fan,
And emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of toil and solitude to charm.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart,
And all his dreams, and all his wanderings shar'd
And bless'd, the Muse, and her celestial art,
Still claim th' enthusiast's fond and first regard.

From Nature's beauties variously compar'd
And variously combin'd, he learns to frame
Those forms of bright perfection, which the bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamour'd, consecrates to never-dying fame.

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
Through ardour to adorn ; but Nature now
To his experienc'd eye a modest grace
Presents, where ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage : he owns her charm divine,
And clears th' ambiguous phrase, and lops th' unwieldy line.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
When the great shepherd of the Mantuan plains
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll :
Fain would I sing what transport storm'd his soul,
How the red current throb'd his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond controul,
Without art graceful, without effort strong,
Homer rais'd high to Heaven the loud, th' impetuous
song.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skill'd to soothe, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
I fain would sing : — but ah ! I strive in vain,

Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound,
With trembling step, to join yon weeping train,
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And mix'd with shrieks of woe, the knells of death
resound.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind !
He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
He, whom each virtue fir'd, each grace refin'd,
Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind !
He sleeps in dust. Ah ! how shall I pursue
My theme ! To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears. Ye flowery lays, adieu !

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled !
And am I left to unavailing woe !
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow !
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go !
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers :
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.
'T is meet that I should mourn : flow forth afresh,
my tears.

THE END.

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